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#### TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

*JIE invites articles/papers on the impact of educational research on classroom practices and policy decisions. Specific examples where this impact is apparent may be given.*

— ACADEMIC EDITOR

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# Common School System

## *Need and Relevance*

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*The idea of a National System of common education to each and every child of the country has been strongly advocated by various commissions and committees ever since Independence. However, over the years, the public schools continued to thrive and with each passing year their demand increased tremendously with the result that quality education has become the privilege of the richer segments of society who are prepared to pay the high cost. The segregation between the haves and have nots in terms of quality education has widened, and in this era of privatization the relevance of a common school system is being questioned. Therefore, it is time to make a decision regarding the need and relevance of a National System of education in the context of the existing realities. The present paper deals with some pertinent issues in this regard.*

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A FAIRLY LARGE and well established system of indigenous education was prevalent in India before the introduction of the modern British system of education. The system was run by individual teachers in religious places such as temples, mosques or *gurudwaras*. However, with the advent of the modern system of education, the indigenous system was gradually phased out as majority of the people favoured the so-called modern system in view of its potential for yielding better economic returns. This resulted in expansion of the school system run by the government and local bodies. However, under the impact of the Swadeshi movement, a large number of private institutions were established as it was felt that acculturation being practised in the government sponsored system was alienating the Indian students from their cultural roots. These institutions made an attempt to integrate cultural values and

national aspirations with modern education. Needless to say that these institutions were sought to be developed as instruments of national service and not as means to earn profit by selling education.

In the post-Independence period, private aided schools had to face severe financial problems as their main source of revenue, i.e., donations from the community, started drying up at a rapid pace. The pressure was built on State Governments through teachers' organizations to enhance the quantum of grant-in-aid and ultimately many states had to agree to provide grant upto 95 per cent of the annual deficit. However, these schools had to accept government control, supervision and norms relating to fees to be charged from privileged students and emoluments to be paid to teachers. However, the number of self-financing (recognized but unaided) institutions started increasing on account of several factors such as states' inability to provide grants, institutions' desire to enjoy maximum autonomy with minimum possible governmental control and parents' willingness to pay hefty amounts as tuition fee and other charges in order to ensure 'good' education for their wards. The stiff competition that the students have to face to enter the world of work or the institutions of professional education has generated unprecedented demand for 'good' education which is supposed to be available in public schools or in schools run on public school lines. The number of children seeking admission to such schools,

especially in urban areas, has increased because of the growing middle class.

The Union Government has also established a variety of schools for specific purposes. For instance, Kendriya Vidyalayas were set up for the children of defence personnel and transferable Central Government employees. The residential Navodaya Vidyalayas have been set up to nurture talent among rural children and Military Schools and Sainik Schools have been set up on Public School lines in order to prepare personnel for defence services.

The existence of multiplicity of school systems with mind boggling variations in the quality of education, has further exacerbated the inequities which have been in existence in our society for the past several centuries. Besides, the cultural alienation that takes place in many of the self-financing schools and their inaccessibility to the common people have also been matters of great concern. All these factors point towards the need for a system which has the potential to promote equity in the society and ensure equality of opportunity to all citizens irrespective of caste, creed, social background and economic status.

### **The Common School Movement**

The idea of a common school system is not a novel one peculiar to India alone. The issue was extensively debated in the first half of the nineteenth century in the United States. A group of educational reformers like Horace Mann (1796-1859), Henry Barnard (1811-1900), Samuel Lewis

(1795-1854), Robert Breckinridge (1802-71), James Carter (1795-1849), Calvin Stowe (1802-86), Caleb Mills (1806-78), John Pierce (1797-1892), Calvin Wiley (1819-87) and John Swett (1830-1913) devoted most of their lives to common school improvement. Regarding private schools, Samuel Lewis stated, "Let the private schools flourish, let their number increase and help raise their character. But however perfect they become, make the common school for all the people—'fully as good, and a little better'". Mann (1796-1859) believed that quality public education would sound the death knell for the private sector of American education. No educational reformer, however, suggested the legal abolition of private schools; they all felt that the common school ought to be the best school. As a result of the concerted efforts of missionaries devoted to the cause, the common school system got entrenched in the educational systems of many countries which led to replacement of the concept of 'exclusive' schooling by the concept of common school system offering equal opportunities to all children to derive similar benefits from the same kind of education. In many countries, the concept of 'neighbourhood school' has been in operation as all children residing in the catchment area of a school have no other alternative but to study in it. The issue was extensively debated and resolved in the nineteenth century. United States has persistently

engaged our attention during the second half of the twentieth century with little chance of an early solution.

In India, 'Post-War Educational Reconstruction Plan' formulated by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) in 1944, envisaged a National System of Education in order to promote equality of educational opportunity on the one hand and quality of education on the other. The report observed that "if there is anything to be like equality of opportunity, it is impossible to justify providing facilities for some of the nation's children and not for others". It recommended a national system of education which should be universal, compulsory and free for all. The need for a common school system was seriously felt in the context of establishing the National System of Education. Another milestone in this context was the Kothari Commission (1964-66) which observed that "the main problem before the country is to evolve a common school system of public education which should cover all parts of the country and all stages of school and strive to provide equality of access to all children. It should be maintained at an adequate level of quality and efficiency so that no parent would ordinarily feel any need to send his child to institutions outside the system such as independent or unrecognized schools". The common school system of public education as envisaged by the Commission should have the following features.

- Accessibility to all children irrespective of class, creed and other differences
- Adequate standards.
- No tuition fee

The Commission suggested a number of steps to realize the goal of a common school system. These included removing the disparities in the working conditions of teachers working under different managements — government, local authorities and private organizations, etc., establishment of District Boards, abolition of tuition fee in private schools, representation of voluntary organizations, teachers and the education department in the managing committee of private schools, and staffing of private schools on the pattern of government schools. However, the most significant contribution of the Kothari Commission in the context of a common school system has been the concept of neighbourhood school which if implemented, shall go a long way in removing social segregation between the haves and have nots. "The neighbourhood school concept implies that each school should be attended by all children in the neighbourhood irrespective of caste, creed, community, religion, economic condition or social status, so that there would be no segregation in schools"

The Commission observed that the idea of neighbourhood school would serve the twin purposes of providing quality education to all children in their familiar setting and of generating interest among the rich, privileged and powerful

class of local community in the affairs of schools.

Consequent upon the recommendations of the Education Commission 1964-66, the Government of India constituted a committee of Members of Parliament in 1967 to examine the question. The Committee expressed its concern about the unhealthy social segregation prevailing between the schools for the privileged and the unprivileged classes of society, and felt the need for strengthening social unity. The committee observed that, "This can be done by moving in the direction of a common school system where all children irrespective of caste, creed, community, religion, economic advantages or social status are imparted education".

The recommendations were later on accepted and given suitable weightage in the National Policy on Education, 1968. The NPE 1968 advocated the idea of a common school system as proposed by the Education Commission with a view to promoting social cohesion and national integration. It also suggested that "all special schools like public schools should be required to admit students on the basis of merit and also to provide a prescribed proportion of free studentships to prevent segregation."

Reiterating the need to evolve and strengthen the national system of education, the National Policy of Education (1986) stated that effective measures would be taken in the direction of a common school system recommended in the 1968 policy. The POA, however, remained

silent and did not spell out any modality or action programme for bringing the common school system into existence. The Ramamurti Committee identified reasons for the common school system not gaining ground so far and suggested specific actions to make the common school system a reality. These included provision of significant increase in outlay for elementary education, provision of special allocation for improvement of school system in backward areas, urban slums, tribal and the hilly areas, etc., ensuring mother tongue as medium of instruction, phased implementation of common school system within a ten-year time frame, and exploring ways of including the private schools in the common school system through a combination of incentives, disincentives and legislation. But, unfortunately, the implementation of a common school system again failed to find a suitable place in the revised POA (1992) which is silent about the modalities to attain this crucial objective, except for the recommendation of opening voluntary schools in hilly, tribal and difficult areas where there is no provision of schooling.

In spite of numerous recommendations to implement a uniform national system of education, the public schools continued to thrive and, with each passing year, their demand increased tremendously with the result that quality education has become the privilege of the richer segments of society who are prepared to pay a high cost for it. Over the

years, the segregation between the haves and have nots in terms of quality education has widened. The idea of a common school system, therefore, is still a distant dream.

### **Social Consequences of Exclusive Schooling**

It is true that the quality of education imparted in private unaided schools, as reflected in public examination results, is better in comparison to government run schools. But the 'quality' is perhaps, the result of selective admissions, availability of parental support, elimination of potential failures, strict enforcement of norms of accountability for teachers and provision of educationally stimulating inputs. The quality of education in government schools can also be improved if it could be made possible to ensure their functioning on the lines of public schools. But, is it desirable and possible to resort to selective admissions and elimination of weak students? Enforcement of norms of accountability and provision of educationally stimulating environment in government schools is another question which needs to be addressed urgently.

The life in a typical unaided school impacts children in several ways. The curricular demands are generally so high that an average student finds it difficult to survive. Besides, these schools inculcate in the students a fondness for the western way of life and indifference towards the Indian way of life and the cultural heritage of India. Parents have to pay a heavy price for buying so called 'quality' edu-



cation for their children. On the one hand, they are forced to part with substantial amounts in the form of tuition fees, development fees, computer, examination fees, building fees, etc., and, above all, forced donations in kind or cash and on the other, they have to face their children's alienation from their family and its cultural background.

The prevailing system of public school education, which is by and large, outside the common system of education, is contributing to accentuating disparities in the society as the products of these schools have a clear edge in the competitive examinations conducted for admissions to higher professional courses or for higher level jobs.

It is often pointed out that middle class families do not like to send their children to the institutions run by the government or local bodies because of their poor standards. It may be true to a large extent but it is also true that many middle class parents would not like their wards to study in the company of children of poor socio-economic background whose cultural background, value system and etiquette are said to be of inferior level.

In spite of exploitation of teachers and students in many unaided schools and the parents' compulsion to pay through their nose, the craze for admission to these institutions is on the increase among the neo-rich middle classes and in many cases among weaker sections of the society also. The reason for this craze lies

on the one hand in the cut-throat competition for higher slots and on the other in the realization that any investment in child's education today shall yield handsome returns in future. Besides, educating children in fee-charging English medium schools has become a prestige symbol for a majority of the middle class families.

### **Towards a National System of Public Education**

The following steps may have to be adopted to concretize the idea of a common school system of public education.

The schools functioning in the private sector fall under three broad categories, namely, (i) unrecognized; (ii) recognized but unaided; (iii) recognized as well as aided. While the institutions of the third category function within the parameters of the common school system of public education, the first category, by and large, is outside the common system and thus is beyond the regulatory mechanism of the State. The second category of institutions, namely, recognized but unaided, are partly within and partly outside the common system. In matters relating to curriculum and examinations, they follow the guidelines of the affiliated Boards but in matters relating to fees and payment of emoluments to teachers they either have their own rules or can afford to ignore the government rules in a suitable manner. The fact of not getting grant-in-aid from the government makes them bold enough to ignore the regulatory mechanism of the

State. This provides them an opportunity to maintain an exclusive character of the institution by resorting to selective admissions from the upper sections of the society. There was a time when public schools and other private schools used to agitate and bring all sorts of pressures on the Government to obtain financial assistance, but nowadays, many private schools spurn the very idea of government assistance as it entails government control and supervision which may make it difficult for them to function arbitrarily, especially with regard to admissions, recruitment, fees, etc. The private schools can be brought to the fold of a common system of public education by doing away with the practice of according recognition without grant-in-aid and by disallowing individuals and societies to run unrecognized schools. In other words, no institution in the private sector should be allowed to function without recognition and all recognized institutions must be provided financial assistance.

The institutions comprising the national (common) system of school education may be required to

1. Implement the constitutional directive of providing free and compulsory education to all children upto the age of 14 years. This implies that no school shall charge any fee from pupils upto the end of the elementary stage i.e., Class VIII. In the case of private schools, fees payable by children should be reimbursed by the Government.
2. All schools falling within the purview of the national system of education shall implement the national curriculum framework in its letter and spirit. Any attempt to introduce elitism through differential curricular inputs in the form of additional subjects or different medium of instruction shall have to be discouraged.
3. All schools comprising the national system should be allowed to charge fees from pupils at the secondary stage. The per capita expenditure on education in government schools may be accepted as the basis of fixation of fees.
4. All schools falling within the national (common) system shall provide similar working and service conditions to their teachers so as to ensure on the one hand stability of teaching staff in all schools and effective check against exploitation on the other.

To strengthen the common system, it would be imperative to improve educational standards in the schools run by the government or local bodies. This could be accomplished by (i) recruiting talented people as Principals on the basis of a competitive examination, (ii) providing essential infrastructural facilities; (iii) enforcing norms of accountability for teachers, (iv) strengthening supervision system; (v) providing attractive service and working conditions to teachers; and (vi) evolving an effective mechanism for speedy redressal of teachers' grievances.

To sum up, the common school system needs to be implemented in order to promote equity and social justice through education. All our efforts should be made to implement it within a stipulated time frame. The strategies suggested in the preceding section of this paper may help in achieving a common national system of education in the country. Possibilities

may be explored to bring the expensive private schools within the purview of a common school system through a contribution of incentives, disincentives and legislation. However, the quality of education in the government schools needs to be improved so that parents do not feel the necessity to send their wards to expensive private schools.

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# Assessment of Children with Special Needs

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*Assessment of children with special needs has become an essential part of education. It is a multi-dimensional task. It will help the teachers to understand specific difficulties of the child and will provide the teacher with essential guidelines for planning and implementing programmes and techniques. The author has stated that assessment of handicapped children can be carried out at five different levels i.e. screening, diagnosis, preparation of educational programmes, implementation, and reassessment of the child and setting new additional goals which are explained in detail. The author has raised some primary issues: Who should assess? What should be assessed? What techniques should be used for the assessment?*

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ASSESSMENT of handicapped children is a multi-dimensional task. At one time it was considered to be a highly specialized area where specifically trained personnel, i.e. psychologists, used to administer formal standardized tests. Now, it is being conceived more broadly. It is now considered to be a process in which various formal tests are used by specialists and informal observation techniques, rating scales, teacher made tests are used by classroom teachers. This makes an indispensable part of assessment. A comprehensive assessment includes health record, evaluation of vision, speech and language, hearing, psycho-motor development, mental development, social functioning, academic status, and the child's present

level of functioning. Such assessment is an indispensable part of effective teaching. A good psycho-educational assessment report must yield data that is directly applicable to the formulation of viable instructional programming for the child. It will help the teacher to understand specific difficulties of the child and will provide the teacher with essential guidelines for planning and implementing programmes and techniques. The assessment data are required not only for preparing a programme for the child, they will also help determine when the child should enter or leave the programme. Assessment of communication skills and pupil performance in academic, social, psycho-motor and self help skills provide the

basics for a sound instructional decision. The objectives of the assessment are as follows:

1. To group the children according to their capabilities
2. To provide them remedial instructions
3. To evaluate capabilities and accomplishments
4. To foster educational and vocational goals
5. To identify educationally and socially maladjusted children
6. To measure the outcome of instructions
7. To certify the child's achievements
8. To provide material for research

For the assessment of handicapped children, a variety of measures are used to get all the relevant information regarding the child. Some of them are informal teacher-made tests, systematic observation, check-list and rating scales, and others are formal psychological tests.

The most efficient evaluation process is one where a variety of formal and informal assessment procedures are employed and interpreted with care for information and clarification as well as for planning of educational programmes.

Handicapped children may be assessed at five different levels:

- |           |                                      |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| Level I   | Screening                            |
| Level II  | Diagnosis                            |
| Level III | Preparation of educational programme |

Level IV	Implementation or carrying out actual programming
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Level V	Reassessment of the child and setting new goals
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### Screening

Screening is a process that identifies children who need further assessment. At this level usually group tests are given for the entire group and the classroom performance of the individuals is measured. Generally, this initial screening is done by a regular class teacher in the classroom. The teacher observes the children over a period of time, keeps a record of the children's behaviour, observes his learning in different situations, interviews the parents and forms an opinion about the child. This helps in identifying children with special needs who are required to be assessed on a more detailed schedule.

### Diagnosis

Diagnosis is a process of gathering information from a variety of sources in order to get a comprehensive picture of a child's functioning and to identify his specific problem. At this stage, specific diagnostic tests are administered to further examine the child for his specific problem in respect of skills, abilities and deficiencies by a multi-disciplinary team. This, therefore, is a critical step in the process. A mistake at this point may result in an inaccurate diagnosis and an inappropriate placement may affect the child's

school career, interfere with the development of his potentialities and spoil the child's whole career

The child's specific problem is determined by a team of medical experts, eye surgeon, ENT specialist, orthopaedic surgeon, psychologist, audiologist, speech pathologist and special educator. Parents as well as the class teacher are also involved in the decision making process.

A single member of the team cannot make the complete diagnosis. A variety of formal standardized tests are administered over different settings by different professionals and also information gathered by the teacher by way of observation or by administering the tests prepared by him, rating scales, interviewing the parents, and similar other informal sources are also taken into consideration before making a final diagnosis about the child or specifying the child's difficulty.

The primary objective of this level of assessment is to obtain an understanding of the child's learning problem by studying all the factors related to the child's specific problem.

To be successful in gathering the correct information needed there must be proper coordination between different professionals.

### **Preparation of Educational Programme**

After the diagnosis is done and the learning problem of the child is ascertained the team specifies an individual education

plan (IEP) for the child. The IEP will list instructional and behavioural goals and objectives, identify the persons responsible for their implementation, prescribe methods of evaluation and in some instances of intervention, set a time frame in which IEP is to be put into operation and evaluated.

At this level of assessment, the special educator as a member of a multi-disciplinary team plays an important role. As per the child's present level of functioning, the special teacher determines long range and short range objectives for the child to achieve. By writing an educational plan for the child, the special educator is playing an indispensable role at this stage.

### **Implementation of Individualized Educational Plan**

At this level, a unique type of cooperation between a special educator and class teacher becomes most important. Once the IEP is prepared, i.e. operational framework is ready, goals and objectives have been specified for long term as well as short term, and also suggestion for the instructional programme is provided, the teacher is to determine what additional data is to be collected, various direct observation techniques involved, collection of data in a systematic way in natural settings. The teacher observes the child's behaviour in a variety of settings where the child is allowed to perform skills, tasks, or behaviours relevant to classroom

assessment needs. Various formal assessment and testing procedures are to be employed to gather additional data about the child to determine how instructional planning is to be developed. Level three of the assessment process provides the framework — the IEP and level four add the substance that completes that framework.

### **Reassessment of the Child and Setting New and Additional Goals for Evaluation**

Each IEP is revised and modified as per the improvement or the learning of the child. The child's performance is assessed daily in relation to the previous day's performance. This is done to assess the effectiveness of the ongoing instructional programme. This is a crucial phase of assessment as on the basis of this it can be determined whether the programme is still to be continued with the child or whether the child should be changed to another learning environment or whether the child should be sent to regular school. On the basis of this continuous assessment, the parents and the others concerned are informed of the child's progress, development and long range prospects.

The role of the classroom teacher is very important at this level. The classroom teacher uses direct observation procedures, adaptive behaviour assessment techniques, and testing by self made tests in classroom or other natural settings.

The child is rated periodically using the same checklist or rating scale which would show the progress after the previous assessment. Such an assessment clearly shows the teacher the skills that have or have not been achieved and, hence planning for instructions based on this assessment is simple.

In short, Level V includes systematic review and modification of the IEP as well as evaluation of the effectiveness of the ongoing instructional programme by the class teacher. It should be done periodically using objectively designed tests that would clearly assess in behavioural terms the child's present level of functioning.

NCERT has prepared a behavioural check-list for the identification of in- and out-of-school children with special needs. This check-list can be handled by a teacher or a parent or any other person who is interested in identifying the child for educational purposes.

NCERT has also prepared a Functional Assessment Guide to be used by teachers in the areas where no special infrastructure is available to identify the child for the purpose of his development, both mental as well as physical. For far flung areas like Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, the scattered desert areas of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh where specialists, psychologists, and special educators are not available, a functional assessment guide is available for the assessment of these children by teachers or by parents or those coming in their contact for the preparation of instruc-

tional planning. This has been a very successful experiment in a variety of special education settings and with very diverse kinds of pupils. It is being used in ten different states and UTs under PIED assisted by UNICEF and in all the states all over the country where IED is in operation.

### **Some Guidelines for the Assessment of Handicapped Children**

- A variety of assessment techniques should be employed to get the maximum information about the child.
- The assessment must be done periodically. There should be continuous evaluation of the child so that the child's performance as well as the teacher's participation and his success may be assessed periodically.
- Results must not be overgeneralized and care must be taken in interpreting the results as these will be used for preparing educational programmes for him.
- All the factors related to the child's learning problems such as his physical health, mental set up, his socio-economic status, the culture and environment to which he belongs must be taken into account while assessing him. This will help the teacher in preparing an educational programme for him.
- As far as possible, psychological tests developed in Indian conditions should be used for him.

### **Issues in Assessment**

Though there are a variety of assessment procedures used by the different professionals in the field, there are a few issues that have emerged during the past few years regarding assessment. The primary issues are who should assess, what should be assessed and what techniques should be used for assessment.

### **Who Should Assess ?**

It is the psychologist who should assess the child. Though the assessment report of the psychologists helps in the classification of the child, it does not give any educationally relevant information for planning an instructional programme for the child. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to take a more active role in assessing the skills and abilities of the child with learning problems.

It has been found that teachers are in the best position to assess the educational/behavioural problems of the child, because they spend more time with the child in the school and are able to observe the child over the years in natural conditions. Therefore, in order to make educational assessment relevant to instructional planning, teachers must have a very active and important role in the evaluation of children with learning problems. However, care must be taken to see that the teachers do not involve themselves in administering technical tests like CAT/TAT/Rorschach or Binet, Wise etc. as they require expertise in administering them.



### **What Should Be Assessed ?**

A good psycho-educational assessment is one that gives guidelines for planning educational programmes. For example, the grade equivalent or age equivalent or I.Q. scores that are obtained from formal tests do not tell the teacher the specific programmes of the child, his learning style and such other information that are essential for the teacher to plan for the child. On the other hand if the assessment data gives information on specific skills and the current levels of the child in that particular skill, it will be more beneficial. Such information can be applied to various educational programmes and teaching strategies. It will outline the precise nature of the child's problems in terms of skill, his strengths and weaknesses that require direct instructional planning. Moreover, assessing specific skills is ideally suited to Educable Mentally Retarded (EMR) and Learning Disabled children because of the direct relationship between the assessment data and putting into practice the different teaching strategies.

### **Which Assessment Technique To Be Used ?**

Traditionally the formal and standardized tests were used to assess the learning problems of children. But the special educators found that the test results are overgeneralized, they have minimal teaching information and general quantitative

scores like I.Q., P.Q. etc

In order to supplement the results of formal tests, different types of informal assessment procedures were included in the psycho-educational assessment process. This included teacher-made tests, various observation techniques, checklists and rating scales. Such tests help to precisely pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses of the child in a particular skill. The teacher can use these tests for the assessment of children. This can directly be applied to teaching. Such tests can be constructed by the teacher from various curriculum materials, easily available to the teachers. These are inexpensive, easier to score and cater to a broad section of the child's behaviour. Ideally, the formal and the informal assessment techniques must be used together to get complete data of the child.

### **Suggestions**

- Assessment should include both psychometric as well as behavioural observation and functional assessment approach.
- Child's present level of functioning may be stressed. His potentialities and strengths may be exploited.
- The tests developed/adapted at institutional level may be translated into regional languages for effective use and administration.

- Observation check-lists may also be developed for identifying children in and out of school for use by teachers, parents and community workers
- Norms are to be developed for different cultural and sub-cultural groups.

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# A Study of Public School Children's Psychological Development in Relation to Home Environment

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*Psychological Development and Environment are two sides of the same coin. The type of environment found at home plays an important role in determining cognitive, emotional and social development of children. In Indian homes, the parent - child relationship is the most important constituent of home environment. Behavioural problems and maladjustment among children are largely a consequence of unfavourable home environment conditions. Heredity factors cannot be changed, but the environment can be manipulated and modified. The present study is an attempt to find out how the home environment influences the psychological development of public school children. The present study revealed that the total home environment and parent-child relationship are significantly related to all the CPQ factors. But the other two dimensions of home environment, i.e., inter-parent relationship and inter-sibling relationship were not found significantly related to any of the CPQ factors.*

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DEVELOPMENT is the product of an interaction between the organism and the environment. The type of environment found at home plays, perhaps, a very important role in determining cognitive, emotional and social development of children. Hereditary factors cannot be changed but environment can be manipulated and modified. Therefore, it is necessary for parents as well as for teachers to know the type of home environment that is likely to foster the consequent psychological development in children. In the

present investigation an attempt was made to obtain this kind of information. A few studies bearing on this have been conducted in India and other countries.

Grigoriou (1984), Trickett (1986), Warner (1986) have found that parental characteristics as reflected in their treatment of children influenced children's personality adjustment. Hetherington, Cox and Cox (1979, 1982), Wahler-Leske-Roberts (1978), Gill (1971), Delissovoy (1973) concluded from their researches that children who are abused by their

Parents develop such personality traits as hypoaggressiveness, hyperactivity, a high potential for annoyance, restlessness and irritability. Yamanaka (1973) using case study method found a linear relationship between children's maladjusted behaviour and various aspects of home environment such as family relations. Slater-Stewart-Linn (1983), Hodges, Buchbaum and Tierney (1983), Kucia (1979), Earls and Richman (1980), Meyers, Nihira and Mink (1984), Andrews (1980) have found that behaviour problems and maladjustment among children are largely a consequence of home environment conditions. A study by Delk and his associates (1974) revealed that behaviour problems develop in children as a result of lack of parental control and due to parental drinking habits. Jurga (1975), Nihira, Meyers and Mink (1983), Blaker and her associates (1987) found that children's identity and self evaluation are shaped by the home.

In India, Mutthayya (1975), and Sud (1975) have found that parental disciplining techniques are related to children's internalization of rules and locus of control. Aggression, dependence and achievement are among the major variables that have been found to be related to home environment in the case of school children in the studies made by Sharda (1972) and Begum (1975). Jain (1973) and Kakkar (1972) concluded that children's altruism, cooperation, sharing behaviour and generosity were linked with the warmth of parent-child relationship. Saxena (1979)

found in her study that a child's identity and self-evaluation are shaped by the home

The present study was an attempt in the same direction. An attempt was made in this study to find out how the home environment influences the psychological development of public school children

### Objectives

- 1 To find out the relationship between the home environment and each of the nine factors (one factor out of the ten factors measured by the CPQ not being considered relevant in case of India's public school children's personality development as measured by CPQ)
- 2 To find out how in case of public school children the parent-child relationship is linked with each of the nine factors of the CPQ
- 3 To find out how in case of public school children inter-parent relationship is linked with each of the nine factors of personality measured by the CPQ
- 4 To find out how in case of public school children, among-siblings relationship is linked with each of the nine factors of personality measured by the CPQ

### Hypotheses

To achieve these objectives the following null-hypotheses were constructed for testing.

1. That the home environment is not related to public school children's psychological development as defined by each of the nine factors of CPQ.
2. That the parent-child relationship is not related to public school children's psychological development as defined by each of the nine factors measured by the CPQ
3. That the inter-parent relationship is not related to public school children's psychological development as defined by each of the nine factors of the CPQ
4. That the among-siblings relationship is not related to public school children's psychological development as defined by each of the nine factors of CPQ.

Under each of the above hypotheses, nine sub-hypotheses, each one pertaining to a CPQ factor, were formulated. Thus, the total number of hypotheses formulated and tested was 36.

## Method

### *Subjects*

The study was conducted on a randomly selected sample of 145 male and female 12-year old children of Class IX drawn from three public schools of Moradabad City.

### *Tools*

For measuring home environment a Home Environment Inventory constructed by Bhatnagar (1988) was used. This inventory defines home environment in terms of parent-child, inter-parent and among siblings relationships. The split-half reliability of this inventory corrected by the Spearman-Brown Formula ( $N=50$ ) as found by Bhatnagar was .925 and its validity against researchers' home visit rating scores was found to be .52 with  $N=25$ . Psychological development of children was measured by using Porter and Cattell's CPQ test which yields scores on ten factors of personality.

### *Procedure*

The data were collected from children on the Home Environment Inventory and the CPQ. On the basis of the scores obtained on the Home Environment Inventory, 30 per cent top and 30 per cent bottom, two groups of children were identified and termed as favourable and unfavourable home environment children. In the top group, there emerged 40 children. Similarly, in the bottom group also there were 40 children. These 80 children belonging to favourable and unfavourable home environments were, then, administered the CPQ\* in all the three schools.

\* Indian Adaptation, Hindi Version

### Results

The contrast group formed on the basis of home environment scores were compared by using two-way analysis of variance method on each of the nine CPQ factors to test, if with regard to these personality factors, there was any significant difference between them. Top-bottom contrast groups were formed, similarly, on separate dimensions of the HEI also i.e. on parent-child relationship, inter-parent relationship and among-sibling relationship. For testing the hypotheses stated earlier, four groups of comparisons were thus made available as follows.

1. Top-Bottom on total home environment
2. Top-Bottom on parent-child relationship
3. Top-Bottom on inter-parent relationship
4. Top-Bottom on among-siblings relationship

Each of these groups was compared on each of the nine factors of CPQ. Thus, in all, 36 comparisons were made. In order to control the variance among the schools, two-way analysis of variance method was used utilizing interaction variance ( $M_{SSXM}$ ) as the error variance ( $SS_w$ ). The F-ratios thus calculated are placed in Table 1.

The study aimed at finding out the relationship between public school children's home environment and their psychological development defined in terms of the personality traits as indicated by nine factors from A to Q measured by the CPQ. The home environment was conceived of as the composite of three home factors, parent-child relationship, inter-parent relationship and among-siblings relationship. The total home environment and each of its three dimensions were separately related to each of the CPQ factors.

Table 1

F-Ratios for 9 CPQ Factors, Three Dimensions of Home Environment and Total Home Environment

Home Environment Inventory	CPQ Factors								
	A	B	C	E	F	G	J	O	Q <sub>3</sub>
Parent-child relationship	30.6	22.51	20.30	24.21	50.12	10.68	15.24	12.62	25.32
Among-siblings relationship	1.20	3.65	4.28	1.60	5.42	2.60	4.56	4.32	2.10
Inter-parent relationship	1.03	3.12	2.12	1.36	2.26	1.89	0.96	0.88	1.45
Total home environment	18.12	38.60	20.56	26.29	18.16	11.52	26.12	25.00	35.68

The results revealed that

1. The total home environment was significantly related to each of the nine personality factors measured by the CPQ.
2. Out of the three dimensions of the home environment only one, the parent-child relationship, was found to be significantly related to each of the CPQ factors.
3. The other two dimensions of the home environment, inter-parent relationship and among-siblings relationship were not found to be related to the development of any personality trait.

It was observed that in case of Indian homes, parent-child relationship, perhaps, constitutes the major determinant of the quality of home environment which influences the child's development significantly. This is what emerges from the fact that only the parent-child relationship is found significantly related to children's development and the other two dimensions, inter-parent relationship and among-siblings relationship, are not found related to any factor of the CPQ. Exactly the same results were obtained by Bhatnagar (1988) also, although that study was based on children of general schools.

Thus, the total home environment, in this study particularly, seems to be synonymous with parent-child relationship. Inter-parent relationship and among-siblings relationship emerge as no contributors to the home environment. It is possible, on the basis of the findings of this

study, to prepare the profile of psychological development of children belonging to favourable and unfavourable environment homes or favourable and unfavourable parent-child relationship homes. Summarily, it may be described as follows

Public school children from favourable environment homes or favourable parent-child relationship homes are found to be warm-hearted and outgoing, more intelligent and insightful, more stable emotionally with a higher degree of ego strength, more assertive and competitive, more enthusiastic and cheerful, more responsible and conscientious, more adventurous and socially bold, more reflective and individualistic, self-confident and self-assured having greater will power and self-control.

Children from unfavourable environment homes or unfavourable parent-child relationship homes, on the other hand, are found to be reserved and detached, distrustful and aloof, less intelligent, having weak egos and a lower degree of emotional stability, submissive and dependent, sober and serious, cautious and full of cares having weaker superego strength, indolent and undependable, shy and timid, individualistic and selfish, feeling inadequate and insecure, having a lower degree of self sentiment and integration.

This is the picture of psychological development of public school children belonging to favourable and unfavourable environment homes.

It was found that the total home environment and parent-child relationship are significantly related to all the CPQ factors. But the other two dimensions of home environment, i.e. inter-parent relationship and among-siblings relationship were not found significantly related to any of the CPQ factors. It was concluded that the total home environment and parent-child relationship are perhaps identical.

In other words it may be said that in case of Indian homes, parent-child relationship is the most important constituent of home environment. This fact has the support of several psychological theories, particularly the theories of Piaget, Erikson and Sears. Sears holds that it is the parents' child-rearing practices that determine the nature of a child's development (Maier, p 167). Erikson also holds that the organism learns to regulate its system in accordance with the way in which the environment is organized in its methods of child care by the parents (Maier, p 35). The cognitive theory of Piaget asserts that experience rather than maturation defines the essence of cognitive development (Maier, P 95). In this way, parent-child relationship assumes a great importance in the context of the child's development even in Piagetian theory.

Many researches done in India as well as in other countries support the findings of this study. Studies made by Bhatnagar (1988), Slater-Stewart-Linn (1983), Hodges, Wechsler and Ballantine (1979), Kucia (1979), Earls and Richman (1980) support

the findings of this study. Meyers and Nihira and Mink (1984) found home environment to be the cause of behaviour problems and maladjustment among children. Grigoriou (1984), Trickett (1986), Warner (1986) found parental characteristics influencing children's personality adjustment. In India, researches done by Muthayya (1975) and Sud (1975) show that parental discipline techniques are related to children's internalization of rules and locus of control. Saxena (1979) found in her study that the child's identity and self-evaluation are shaped by the home. Murlidharan (1970) revealed that the development of the child is positively related to stimulation at home.

Another dimension, the inter-parent relationship was not found to be significantly related to any of the CPQ factors. In Western countries, it has been found to be related to children's behaviour. The studies made by Yamanaka (1973), Slater *et al* (1983), and Whitehead (1979) have shown that disrupted homes are responsible for disturbances in boys and girls. Similar is the finding of Hodges *et al* (1979). However, in the case of Indian homes and public school children of the present study, it was not found to be so. One reason for this may be that the school environment of these children compensates for the deficiency in the home environment with the result that the effect of the single factor is not visible. There is, moreover, a tendency on the part of Indian parents to hide from their children the kind of relationship they



have between them. Another reason for inter-parent relationship not being found significantly related to children's development in India may be the fact that it is not an independent factor. Rather, it operates through parent-child relationship, i.e. it affects only when they are reflected in parent-child relationship.

The among-siblings relationship dimension of home environment also has been found to be not related to children's psychological development. Though the researches done by Bandura (1977), Bandura and Walters (1963), Abramovitch (1979) show that siblings play an important role in the day-to-day life of other children, the findings of the present study do not support this. This may be for the reason that there is no consistency in the reinforcement pattern based on sibling

interactions in Indian homes. Again, it is elders in Indian homes who have greater capacity to reinforce than the siblings. Sears (Maier, 1977) also accepted this when he said that the child is apt to adopt everything in his elder's behaviour which he perceives as appropriate to the person's role which may involve any member of his family, but pre-eminently of either or both parents. Even from the point of view of power and exchange relationship theory of family interaction in which the father is supposed to be the most powerful agent and other members less powerful and least important, the siblings are conceptualized as powerless socializing agents in Indian homes. Hence the findings of this study may be considered plausible and in line with expectations.

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# Control of Public Education in Nigeria since Independence

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*This article critically examines the government's control of public education in Nigeria from 1960 when the country attained her independence up to the present. The paper shows that during the first Republic (1960-1966) the dual control system inherited from Britain was practised. The government provided grants-in-aid to schools but otherwise left the administration of the schools to Christian Missions and other voluntary agencies. With the advent of military rule in 1966 and the take-over of schools from the voluntary agencies by state governments, the dual system gave way to state control. The government had total monopoly of control over all levels of the educational system.*

*During the second Republic (1979-1983) and the second era of military rule which began in 1983, the budgetary implications of state monopoly of education and nationwide outcry against the moral decline of the schools stimulated a movement towards a re-appraisal of state monopoly of education.*

*To stop the drift towards total collapse of the nation's educational system and to achieve the objectives stated in the national policy on education the writer recommends that*

- 1 The control and management of education in Nigeria should be the joint responsibility of the government, local communities and voluntary agencies acting in partnership, with active participation of teachers at all levels of decision-making.*
  - 2 Voluntary agencies and individuals who so desire should be allowed to establish and run their own schools, at their own expense. The operation of such schools, should conform to national policies and standards.*
  - 3 Government should provide adequate funds, facilities, equipment and human resources to ensure that all schools including those run by voluntary agencies and private individuals are regularly and effectively supervised.*
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THIS ARTICLE examines the control of education in Nigeria since independence under four sub-periods: (1) the First Republic (1960-1966); (2) First Era of

Military Rule (1966-1979), (3) the Second Republic (1979-1983), and (4) the Second Era of Military Rule which began in 1983.

### **The First Republic (1960-1966)**

From 1952 to 15 January 1966, when the first Republic was succeeded by a Military Government, the control and administration of education in Nigeria was shared between the Federal Government and the Regional Governments.

The Federal Government shared with the Regional Government control over and universities and other institutions of higher education brought into being through regional legislative action.

Primary, secondary, technical and vocational education, teacher training and adult education were under the control of the various regional governments.

To effect control over educational matters, a Federal Ministry and three Regional Ministries of Education were created in 1953, one for each of the Regions — Eastern, Northern and Western Region. Education in Lagos and in the former British mandated territory of the Cameroon was a Federal concern. In 1963, the West Regional Ministry was split into two when the former Mid-Western Region was carved out of the Western Region.

In all the regions and in the Federal territory of Lagos, all local units of administration were involved in the educational enterprise.

In every part of the country, despite local variations, such matters as curriculum and syllabuses were prepared for the schools from the Regional Ministries. It was left to the individual schools to work

out how best to construct their own timetable to comply with the recommendations of the Ministry of Education (Taiwo, 1972).

In the schools run by voluntary agencies, the sponsoring agency or religious denomination made its influence felt in such matters as the manner of daily religious worship, church and mosque attendance and general tone of the school.

At the approach of independence in October 1960 and soon after it, the Regions turned attention to the criticisms of the educational system and the complaints of the falling standard in primary education caused by problems associated with the universal primary education introduced in the Regions. The Western Region appointed the Banjo Commission in December 1960, to review its educational system. The Eastern Region appointed the Dike Commission in 1958 to review the system of education in the Eastern Region, while the Northern Region appointed in January 1961, the late Mr H. Oldman, then Chief Education Officer for the City of York in the United Kingdom, sole Commissioner to write a report on the problems of administration and finance associated with the development of primary education in Northern Nigeria.

There was considerable agreement by the independent commissions in recommending a system which involved the local authorities and harnessed the administrative experience of those who were engaged in educational work and development (Taiwo, 1972 8)

Of the various reports of commissions of enquiry set up in the pre-war period, the one which, at the national level, had the greatest impact on the control of education, especially as it relates to the service conditions of teachers, was the Adefarasin Report. For many years before the Nigerian Civil War, the service conditions of voluntary agency teachers had been a cause of constant argument between the Federal Government and the Regional (now State) Governments on the one hand, and the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) on the other. An example was the one of 1964 which culminated in a general strike action by the voluntary agency teachers led by the NUT on the specific issue of the failure of the Federal Government to set up a National Joint Negotiating Council to cater for the conditions of service of voluntary agency teachers.

The strike which lasted from 1 to 9 October 1964 led to the setting up, by the Federal Government, of a National Joint Negotiating Council under the chairmanship of Mr Justice J.A. Adefarasin "to consider the grading, remuneration and conditions of service of teachers and to make recommendations" (Ogunu, 1976:25).

The Adefarasin Report made a number of recommendations, the most important of which concerned the establishment of Regional and/or Local School Boards to deal with the appointments and promotion within the service discipline, collection and disbursement of funds and such

other duties as the Minister of Education may from time to time direct.

The council recommended that all governments of the Federation should be requested to work out the details, structure and functions of the proposed Regional and/or Local School Boards and to refer their proposals to the National Joint Negotiating Council for further negotiation. "It is to be understood that what is contemplated here is an entirely new machinery which should not be identified for any existing local council or Regional Advisory Boards of Education" (Ogunu, 1976:26).

The Federal Government's response to the recommendations was stated in the Federal Government's White Paper No. 2 of 1965 as follows:

The Governments in the Federation have accepted the desirability of establishing Regional and/or Local School Boards, but consider that each Government be allowed to formulate its own policy regarding the proposed Boards. These Boards shall operate under specific and general control of the Ministries of Education in order to ensure efficiency in exercise of any functions assigned to them. (*Ibid*)

A significant outcome of the above was the creation of State and Local School Boards in the States. An example is the former Midwestern (later renamed "Bendel") State Government which established State and Local School Boards by Edict No. 12 of 1969.

It should be noted, however, that the creation of school Boards did not deprive voluntary agencies of their schools. Among other things, they performed the following functions.

- 1 Initiation of the development programme of their institutions;
2. Making financial provision for the training of staff for their institutions;
- 3 General supervision of the work of their schools and colleges,
4. Responsibility for the maintenance of the school building under direction of the boards,
- 5 Collection of fees and other dues;
6. Disbursement of school funds authorized by the State or Local School Board;
7. Propagation of the religious tenets of the voluntary agency concerned subject to the laws of the Federation of Nigeria
- 8 Consultations with the State School Board in Staff matters,
- 9 Other duties that were assigned to them from time to time by the Ministry of Education.

To help the proprietors in the discharge of their duties, Boards of Governors of Post Primary Institutions were retained as well as Education Advisers for the voluntary agencies and the Local Authority Schools.

From the above analysis, it can be seen that the period from independence

to the end of the First Republic and even up to 1969 was one of partnership between the governments and voluntary agencies in the control and management of schools. By the end of the period, voluntary agency schools were brought under the administration of State Boards but the schools still belonged to the voluntary agencies who performed all the functions outlined above, while the conditions of service of the voluntary agency teachers were those operated by the State School Boards for all teachers (including the voluntary agency teachers) in the State. Had this set-up as in the former Bendel State prior to the take-over of schools in 1972 been allowed to survive and improved upon, perhaps the unfortunate estrangement of the voluntary agencies from the system of education in the country and the disastrous consequences for education which followed later might not have occurred.

### **First Era of Military Rule (1966-1979)**

The first era of military rule in Nigeria witnessed a revolutionary departure from the system of dual control of education in the country.

On 26 May 1970, the Government of the former East Central State of Nigeria formally took over all primary and post-primary schools owned by voluntary agencies in the State by the Public Education Edict, 1970 (Edict No. 2 of 1971). The official reason given for the take over was "to secure central control and an

integrated system of education which will guarantee uniform standard, fair distribution of educational facilities and reduce the cost of running the schools" (cf. East Central State of Nigeria Edict No. 2 of 1971, preamble, Para 2)

But according to Onyema Abaekwume, "the take-over was meant to be a reprisal against the missionaries for their so-called meddlesomeness during the civil war" (cf. *Sunday Statesman*, 12 July 1981, p 2) Ejiogu (1986:91) adds that "The role of the Christian missions in allegedly aiding and abetting the civil war on the side of Biafra further worsened their image before the government"

The impact of this radical departure in the governance and control of education in a predominantly Christian area of the country soon spread to other parts of the country. In 1972, the Government of the former Mid-Western State promulgated the 1972 Education Edict by which it took over all primary and post-primary schools from voluntary agencies. In the Ministry of Education, Benin City, Circular No. EA/MB/13/11 of 11 November 1974, captioned 'Religion in School' the Government explained that "One of the aims of the take-over of schools by Government is to secularize education." It emphasized that "all schools should be totally non-denominational and religious instructions should be offered in schools only on a non-denominational basis. This should apply to schools from the nursery level to post-primary school level, including Teacher Training Colleges."

All the other Southern States and some States in the northern part of the country took over schools from voluntary agencies at varying times before the end of the 1970s. The compulsory take-over of all schools by the State was a direct contravention of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26) which recognizes that parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that should be given to their children. The existence of religious (denominational) schools is essential if parents will be enabled to exercise their freedom of choice of the type of education for their children.

### **The Second Republic (1979-1983)**

With the coming into effect of the 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the emergence of civilian administration in October 1979, both primary and secondary schools became largely the responsibility of the State and local governments, with the exception of Federal Government Colleges (Unity Schools) situated in the States.

According to Article 35 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979

No religious community or denominations shall be prevented from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomination in any place of education maintained wholly by that community or denomination.



In sub-section 36(1) it says that

Every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference

Sub-section 36 (2) stipulates that "every person shall be entitled to own, establish and operate any medium for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinions "

The relevance of these constitutional provisions to the subject being discussed is that they guarantee the fundamental rights of the individual to receive and impart ideas in accordance with the dictates of their conscience and beliefs. A practical illustration of this constitutional guarantee of fundamental rights was the landmark case of Archbishop Anthony Olubumi Okogie (Trustee of Roman Catholic Schools) and six others versus the Attorney-General of Lagos State [(1981) 2 NCLR 337] By a circular letter dated 26 March 1980 the Lagos State Government purported to abolish private education in the State. The Plaintiffs (Archbishop Okogie and others) challenged the circular as unconstitutional. The Federal Court ruled in favour of the plaintiff. The presiding Judge held that the rights of the plaintiffs to own and operate schools must be protected from being abolished by the government

It is not our system that a child or any citizen for that matter, is a mere creature

of the state. In our system the State has no right to interfere with the freedom, or any other constitutional right of the citizen save as allowed by the Constitution itself...

(Mamman Nasir (1981) 2 NCLR 337)

Another significant development which clarified individual/voluntary agency-government relationship in the matter of education was the issuance of the National Policy on Education by the Federal Government in 1977, later revised in 1981

Contrary to encouraging State monopoly of education, the National Policy made allowance for the involvement of individuals and interested groups in the running of schools, provided such schools met some principles. With regard to primary schools, it states in Section 15 (13)

Government welcomes the contribution of voluntary agencies, communities and private individuals in the establishment and management of primary schools alongside those provided by the State Governments as long as they meet the minimum standards laid down by the Federal Government. A similar provision is made in Section 22 (1) in respect of secondary schools, and in Section 36 (v) in respect of universities.

That some State Governments made serious mistakes in biting more than they could chew by taking over schools from voluntary agencies in the manner they (governments) did in the previous military regime (early 1970s) soon became

apparent in terms of the rising cost of education, well beyond what the Federal Government could cope with, the falling standard of education and the terrible moral decline in schools.

Writing under the caption 'Financing and Managing Primary and Secondary Schools in Nigeria' Moses Omoniwa observed that "perhaps the most serious symptom of the crisis that has hit the education system at both primary and secondary levels has been the inability of most state and local governments to pay the salaries and allowances of their teachers. This has been seen through endless strike actions by teachers and closure of schools by governments" (Cf *New Nigeria*, 27 August 1962, p. 5)

At the end of the Second Republic, therefore, the government was beginning to see the dangers to the economic and moral well-being of the nation posed by the take-over of the schools. The need for individual/voluntary agency participation in education was being keenly felt.

### **Second Era of Military Rule**

The nation-wide call for hand-over of schools to voluntary agencies which echoed during the preceding regime was further intensified during the second era of military rule which began in 1983 as the stark realities of the take-over dawned more and more on many of those who had earlier hailed it. Supporting the take-over action, the President of the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) reportedly expressed the Union's strong opposition to

the hand-over of schools to voluntary agencies. According to the Nigerian Observer of 13 July 1981, the NUT boss argued that "the teachers of this country were no longer ready to have their service career entrusted to the whim and caprices of religious overlords or shylock independent proprietors".

But nine years after the government take-over of schools, the NUT in a press release captioned 'The Agony of Nigerian Teachers' (*Nigerian Statesman*, 11 April 1983) sought to bring to the attention of the Nigerian public "the predicaments of the teachers in Nigeria in the past few years over many vital issues which indirectly negatively affect their professional competence. The huge resources the different governments of the Federation spend on education are certainly not worth it if teachers, the executors of educational policies are so maltreated and neglected by government that no one with an alternative would like to stay a day longer in the one-time noble profession of teaching."

Among the "numerous grievances of the Nigerian teachers" highlighted by the Union was delay in the payment of teachers' salaries and allowances.

Speaking at a symposium titled 'Career for Women' to mark the Golden Jubilee Anniversary of St Agnes' College, Lagos, the former Lagos State Commissioner for Education, Dr A.A. Rokosu, said that the development of education in Nigeria should be the result of cooperation between voluntary agencies, indi-

viduals and the government (Cf. *National Concord*, 7 March 1984)

On 11 December, 1984, during a courtsey call on the Catholic Bishop of Benin City, Rt Rev Dr PF Ekpu, the former Commissioner for Education in the defunct Bendel State, Dr Abel Guobadia made a very strong appeal to voluntary organizations to help salvage "our schools" (Cf *Nigeria Observer*, 14 December 1984).

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The period 1960 to 1990 was one of significant changes in the degree of control the State exercised over education

During the First Republic (1960-66) the system of dual control inherited from Britain was practised. Government provided grants-in-aid to schools but otherwise left the administration of the schools to Christian Missions and other voluntary agencies.

With the advent of military rule in 1966 and the take-over of schools from voluntary agencies by State Governments, the dual system gave way to State control. The Government take-over of schools meant, among other things, the total monopoly by Government of all levels of the educational system

During the Second Republic (1979-83) and the second era of military rule which began in 1983, the budgetary implications

of a state monopoly of education and the nation-wide outcry against the moral decline of the schools stimulated a movement towards re-appraisal of State monopoly.

In view of the disastrous consequences of Government's compulsory take-over of schools from voluntary agencies described above, the following measures should be taken to ensure that the laudable objectives of our national policy on education are achieved.

1. The control and management of education in Nigeria should be the joint responsibility of the government, local communities and voluntary agencies acting in partnership, with active participation of teachers at all levels of decision-making.
2. Voluntary agencies and individuals who so desire should be allowed to establish and run their own schools, at their own expense. The operation of such schools should conform to national policies and standards.
3. Government should provide adequate funds, facilities, equipment and human resources for school inspection and ensure that all schools including those run by voluntary agencies and private individuals are regularly and effectively supervised.

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# A Comparative Study of the Sense of Accountability between Assamese Medium and English Medium Secondary School Teachers

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*There is a great hue and cry in the State of Assam regarding the lack of accountability of teachers in general and Assamese medium school teachers in particular. Evidently this has resulted in a great fascination and preference for English medium schools to Assamese medium schools. The public and English medium schools are regarded as centres of learning where tremendous efforts are believed to be made to achieve a high level of academic excellence. With these observations in mind, an attempt has been made in this normative survey study, first to identify if secondary schools teachers of Assam possess a sense of accountability vis-a-vis the institution where they work, their locale, sex, qualification and experience; second, to find out if English medium secondary school teachers are more accountable than Assamese medium secondary school teachers.*

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THE NATIONAL Policy on Education 1986 which marked a significant step in the history of education in post-Independent India, visualized the paramount role of teachers in the overall educational system of our country. This policy stressed the need for radical reconstruction of the educational system with the aim of improving quality. In order to chalk out a meaningful programme of quality improvement, it suggested two basic programmes of action: physical facilities on the one hand and qualified, competent teachers on

the other. Placing complete trust in the teaching community, this policy has emphasized teachers' accountability to pupils, community and their own profession. It is an accepted fact by one and all that availability of teachers in adequate number and their accountability to role performance coupled with the level of their competence are the most essential ingredients to achieve excellence in education.

Equality of educational opportunity was a cherished goal set before us by the

framers of our Constitution, but even after many decades of planning and policies we are nowhere near this goal. In fact, we are drifting further away from it. At present there are two parallel systems in school education — private school system and government or government aided school system. The quality of education imparted in these schools is often judged in terms of pass percentage without giving any considerations to other variables that contribute to academic achievement. This is a fallacious criterion because it takes into consideration neither quality of the entrants nor the proportion of students who reach the final class. Thus, people outside the educational system are neither clear nor in agreement about the quality of education that is imparted in these two types of schools, namely English medium or private schools and Assamese medium or Government schools. This necessitates a critical analysis and thorough understanding of the phenomenon that exists in these two types of schools. Thus from these view points it has become essential to find an answer to the question. Do the secondary school teachers of Assam possess a sense of accountability towards their professional roles? Is there a significant difference in the sense of accountability between English medium and Assamese medium secondary school teachers? This paper attempts to answer these questions on the

basis of a study conducted in secondary schools in the State of Assam.

### Objectives

1. To compare the sense of accountability between the Assamese medium and English medium secondary school teachers with respect to their
    2. sex
    3. qualification
    4. locale
    5. teaching experiences
  6. To find out the extent to which the secondary school teachers have a sense of accountability towards their professional roles.
  7. To find out the extent to which the Assamese medium secondary school teachers have a sense of accountability towards their professional roles.
  8. To find out the extent to which the English medium secondary school teachers have a sense of accountability towards their professional roles.
- Inherent in the achievement of the main objectives of the study was the following concomitant objective.
9. To develop an accountability scale to measure the sense of accountability among the secondary school teachers of Dibrugarh town.

### Hypotheses of Study

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the following hypotheses, corresponding to each objective, were subjected to statistical testing

1. There is no significant difference in the sense of accountability between Assamese medium and English medium secondary school teachers.  
There is no significant difference in the sense of accountability between Assamese medium and English medium secondary school teachers with regard to their
2. sex
3. qualification
4. locale
5. experiences
6. More than 50 per cent of the teachers involved in this study do not have a sense of accountability towards their professional roles.
7. More than 50 per cent of the teachers belonging to Assamese medium schools do not have a sense of accountability towards their professional roles.
8. More than 50 per cent of the teachers belonging to English medium schools do not have a sense of accountability to their professional roles.

### Methodology

This study was essentially a survey investigation intended to compare the sense of

accountability between Assamese medium and English medium secondary school teachers. In order to conduct this study, Normative Survey Method was employed to collect the relevant data for the verification of the hypotheses. The methodology followed in carrying out this investigation is described below

- i. *Population* - The population for the present study was defined as all the male and female teachers of existing secondary schools of both English and Assamese medium of Dibrugarh town
- ii. *Sample* . In order to draw a representative sample, a list of these schools (both English and Assamese medium) was collected from the office of the Inspector of Dibrugarh town. After having determined the number of secondary schools in Dibrugarh town, as many as four recognized English medium schools and six Government-aided Assamese medium schools were selected from 15 Assamese medium secondary schools by applying the principle of random sampling technique. Thus the results of this study are applicable to both male and female secondary school teachers of Dibrugarh town. From the above schools thus chosen, as many as 177 secondary school teachers were selected randomly by flipping a coin. This sample consisted of as many as 96 Assamese medium secondary school teachers and 81 English medium secondary school teachers. Thus

the final sample of this study consisted of 177 secondary school teachers of both Assamese medium and English medium schools.

- iii *Tool* In order to collect the relevant data required for the study, Teacher's Accountability Scale was developed. The final form of the Teacher's Accountability Scale consisted of 33 items. The reliability of the scale was calculated by Spearman - Brown Prophecy formula and was found to be .82 which is sufficient to consider this scale reliable. However, with regard to the validity of the scale, experts and practitioners suggested various aspects of teacher accountability be included in the scale.
- iv *Statistical Technique Used* : Critical Ratio (C.R.) was computed for testing the hypotheses and for drawing conclusions in this study.

### Analysis and Interpretation

The analyses of the results related to each hypotheses are given below :

TABLE 1

**Difference in the Sense of Accountability between Assamese Medium and English Medium Secondary School Teachers**

School	N	Mean	S.D	M/d	S/d	C.R
Assamese	96	157.11	16.5	.63	2.58	24*
English medium	81	157.74	17.63			

\* Not significant at .05 level

The results in Table 1 indicate that there is no significant difference between the two means. This means that there is no significant difference in the sense of accountability of the Assamese medium and English medium secondary school teachers. Teachers of both the media are equally accountable and the level of their accountability is average.

TABLE 2

**Difference in the Sense of Accountability between English Medium and Assamese Medium Secondary School Teachers with Respect to Their Sex**

Sex	English Medium			Assamese Medium			C.R
	N	M	S.D	N	M	S.D	
Male	18	153.7	28.9	32	154	21	0.04*
Female	63	158.9	17.6	64	158.3	14.7	0.18*

\* Not significant at .05 level

The results of the analysis in Table 2 depict that when the mean scores of Assamese medium male and female teachers were compared with the mean scores of English medium male and female teachers by calculating C.R., the C.R. values were found to be 0.04 and 0.18 which are not significant at .05 level. This means that there is no significant difference between Assamese medium and English medium male and female teachers in terms of their sense of accountability. Thus it appears that the male and female teachers of both the media are equally accountable and the level of their accountability is average.



TABLE 3

**Difference in the Sense of Accountability between Assamese Medium and English Medium Secondary School Teachers with Respect to Their Qualification**

Qualification	English Medium			Assamese Medium			C.R
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
B.Ed./M.Ed	16	168.1	17.0	23	162.3	15.1	0.03*
M.A./M.Sc. B.A./B.Sc.	65	155.7	15.0	73	161.4	17.5	2.05**

\* Not significant at .05 level

\*\* Significant at .05 level

The results of analysis in Table 3 indicate that when the mean score of Assamese medium professionally qualified teachers was compared with the mean score of English medium professionally qualified teachers by calculating Critical Ratio, the Critical Ratio value was found to be 0.03 which is not significant at .05 level. This implies that there is no significant difference between Assamese medium and English medium professionally qualified teachers. Thus it appears that professionally qualified teachers of both the mediums are equally accountable and the level of their accountability is average.

Similarly, when the mean score of Assamese medium academically qualified secondary school teachers was compared with the mean score of English medium academically qualified secondary school teachers by calculating the Critical Ratio,

the Critical Ratio value was found to be 2.05 which is significant at .05 level. This means that the Assamese medium academically qualified teachers are more accountable than the English medium academically qualified secondary school teachers

TABLE 4

**Difference in the Sense of Accountability between Assamese Medium and English Medium Secondary School Teachers with Respect to Their Locale**

Locale	English Medium			Assamese Medium			C.R
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Rural	15	161.1	15.0	9	153.3	8.3	1.6*
Urban	65	159.2	16.5	87	155.6	21.6	1.2*

\* Not significant at .05 level

The results of analysis in Table 4 indicate that when the mean scores of Assamese medium rural and urban teachers were compared with the mean scores of English medium rural and urban teachers by calculating C.R, the C.R. values were found to be 1.6 and 1.2 which are not significant at .05 level. This means that there is no significant difference between Assamese medium and English medium rural and urban teachers in terms of their sense of accountability. Thus it appears that rural and urban teachers of both the media are equally accountable and the level of their accountability is average.

TABLE 5

**Difference in the Sense of Accountability between Assamese Medium and English Medium Secondary School Teachers with Respect to Their Teaching Experience.**

Experience	English Medium			Assamese Medium			C.R.
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Above 15 years	18	151.14	19.7	52	163.7	12.0	2.5*
Below 15 years	63	159.5	14.6	44	151.8	20.8	2.13*

\*Significant at .05 level

The results of analysis in Table 5 show that when mean scores of Assamese medium teachers having more teaching experience (above 15 years) and less teaching experience (below 15 years) were compared with the mean scores of English medium teachers having more teaching experience (above 15 years) and less teaching experience (below 15 years) by calculating C.R., the C.R. values were found to be 2.50 and 2.13 which are significant at .05 level. This means that Assamese medium secondary school teachers having more teaching experience are more accountable than English medium secondary school teachers having more teaching experience. However, English medium secondary school teachers having less teaching experience are more accountable than Assamese medium secondary school teachers having less teaching experience.

TABLE 6

**The Percentage of Sense of Accountability of Secondary School Teachers**

School	N	B.N.	A.N.	% of B.N.	% of A.N.
English Medium and Assamese Medium	177	6	171	3.38	96.61

N = Total number of teachers

B.N. = Scores below neutral

A.N. = Scores above neutral

The results of analysis in Table 6 indicate that from the total scores of 177 teachers, it was found that 171 teachers scored above the neutral score of 114 and six teachers scored below the neutral score in the scale. By calculating the percentage of the total cases, it was found that 96.61 per cent of the teachers were accountable to their professional roles whereas only 3.38 per cent of the teachers were found to be not accountable to their professional roles.

TABLE 7

**The Percentage of Sense of Accountability of the Secondary School Teachers belonging to Assamese Medium Schools.**

School	N	B.N.	A.N.	% of B.N.	% of A.N.
Assamese Medium	96	3	93	3.12	96.88

N = Total number of teachers

B.N. = Scores below neutral

A.N. = Scores above neutral

The results of analysis in Table 7 indicate that from the total score of 96 teachers it

was found that 73 teachers scored above the neutral score of 114 and three teachers scored below the neutral score in the scale. By calculating the percentage of the total cases, it was found that 96.88 per cent of the teachers were accountable to their professional roles whereas only 3.12 per cent of the teachers were found to be not accountable

TABLE 8

**The Percentage of Sense of Accountability of the Secondary School Teachers belonging to English Medium Schools.**

<i>School</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>BN</i>	<i>AN</i>	<i>% of BN</i>	<i>% of AN</i>
English Medium	81	3	73	3.7	96.3

- N* = Total number of teachers  
*BN* = Scores below neutral  
*AN* = Scores above neutral

The results of analysis in Table 8 indicate that from the total scores of 81 teachers, it was found that 78 teachers scored above the neutral score of 114 and three teachers scored below the neutral score in the scale. By calculating the percentage of the total cases, it was found that 96.3 per cent of the teachers were accountable to their professional roles whereas only 3.7 per cent of the teachers were found to be not accountable

## Discussion

The analysis of the study reveals that in spite of the criticisms that are hurled against the Assamese medium secondary school teachers, they are found equally accountable and their sense of accountability,

therefore, should be acclaimed. Moreover, in respect of certain variables, they are found more accountable than English medium school teachers. If the quality of education in these schools is found 'poor', variables other than teacher, like educational facilities at home and outside, peer group interaction, level of their motivation, personality make up and the level of their intelligence, etc are to be considered. It is, however, evident that teachers from both the mediums are equally accountable and the level of their accountability is average.

Moreover, sense of accountability is an ubiquitous phenomenon, and hence does not relate to teachers' place of work, sex, qualification, years of teaching experience, etc. Considered from these points of view, the medium of instruction has also nothing to contribute to the sense of accountability of the teachers. As a result, teachers belonging to both mediums of instruction have been found equally accountable to their professional roles.

It is obvious from the findings that teachers from both parallel system schools strive hard to achieve academic excellence and they are playing a pivotal role in shaping the destiny of our nation in their classrooms. They are responsible and dedicated professionals possessing a democratic outlook, scientific attitude and, as far as possible, try to keep abreast of current knowledge. They manage the class effectively by making the teaching-learning process interesting. It is also satisfying to find that they work towards their growth

in the profession by participating in the in-service programmes whenever such opportunities are provided to them. It may not be feasible to impart in-service training to the vast majority of our secondary school teachers through face-to-face interaction mode. So they should avail themselves of all the opportunities that are placed at their disposal for professional growth.

As a matter of fact, the findings of the present study have helped, to a great extent, the secondary school teachers of Assamese medium schools to redeem their image that was distorted by criticisms, public outcry and other false allegations. It does put both the Assamese medium and English medium secondary school teachers on an equal footing.

### Findings

The findings of the present study are as follows

1. There is no significant difference in the sense of accountability between English medium and Assamese medium secondary school teachers. Teachers of both the mediums are equally accountable towards their professional roles.
2. There is no significant difference in the sense of accountability between English medium and Assamese medium secondary school teachers with respect to their sex. Male and female teachers of both the mediums are equally accountable and the level of their accountability is average.
3. There is no significant difference in the sense of accountability between Assamese medium and English medium professionally qualified secondary school teachers. But there is a significant difference in the sense of accountability between Assamese medium and English medium academically qualified teachers. Assamese medium academically qualified teachers are more accountable than English medium academically qualified secondary school teachers.
4. There is no significant difference in the sense of accountability between English medium and Assamese medium secondary school teachers with respect to their locale. Teachers from both rural and urban areas are found equally accountable and their level of accountability is average.
5. There is a significant difference in the sense of accountability between English medium and Assamese medium secondary school teachers with respect to their teaching experience. The more experienced teachers of Assamese medium are found more accountable than the more experienced teachers of English medium. Similarly, the less experienced teachers of English medium are found more accountable towards their professional roles than the less experienced teachers of Assamese medium schools.
6. Of the secondary school teachers involved in this study, 96.61 per cent do

have a sense of accountability towards their professional roles.

7. Of the Assamese medium secondary school teachers 96.88 per cent are found to have a sense of accountability towards their professional roles.
8. Of the English medium secondary school teachers 96.3 per cent have a sense of accountability towards their professional roles

From the findings of the study it can be safely concluded that the great hue and cry in the State of Assam regarding the lack of responsibility of secondary school teachers and the accusation often levelled against them are baseless and irrational to a great extent. There are still 'a majority of secondary school teachers of both the mediums, who are dedicated and stick to their role performances responsibility. It would be quite cynical to allege that the Assamese medium teachers of today are devoid of a sense of accountability. Moreover, secondary school teachers belonging to both the mediums are equally accountable to their professional roles

### **Suggestions**

This study is not a comprehensive or exhaustive one. The investigator does not claim to give the final answer to the problem. The very nature of the research

entails that there should be further scope for investigation and research. With this aim in view, the following suggestions are given for further research.

1. There is a need to study the sense of accountability of the secondary school teachers from different perspectives like from the point of view of the school management, parents' and students' perception of teacher accountability
2. Further study could be undertaken to compare the sense of accountability between teachers working in different types of managements like provincialized schools and unrecognized schools
3. Since the sample of the study consisted of only 177 secondary school teachers, it is not sufficient to produce dependable knowledge on the basis of such limited samples. Hence, this can be replicated on a relatively larger sample for establishing the correctness of the results in order to arrive at more dependable knowledge
4. There is also a need to study the sense of accountability among the secondary school teachers in relation to other variables like age, caste, family, occupation and residence during their school days

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# Towards a Reflective Approach to the Teaching of English

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*In the changing Indian scenario, the teacher has become a facilitator of learning. The facilitator is concerned not only with individual, interpersonal skills, but also with group dynamics. For some reason English has been taught as a content rather than a skill subject. The three language formula suggests equal weightage to Hindi, the regional language and English. But the absence of effective demarcation of the roles of these three languages, has led to the development of an ambiguous attitude towards English. In the present paper the author examines the relevance of a reflective approach to its teaching and its implementation so that English teaching becomes more interesting and joyful.*

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INDIAN SOCIETY today is fast changing where old views and concepts have been yielding place to new scientific interpretations, often accelerated by the accumulation of facts and by the development of new attitudes. Thus the nature and needs of the society are to be taken care of by the prevailing system of education. This becomes all the more necessary with India's National Policy on Education (1986) which implicitly suggests that the core educational system of a country needs redirection from time to time in accordance with cultural, economic and technological changes so as to make the

teacher and the classroom powerful instruments of social change. At the same time, a teacher's skills have to be updated along with kindling his/her desire to know more and more. Experience alone may not be sufficient to stimulate growth, a critical awareness of what one is doing is equally important. With this thinking teachers may realize that different students in different classrooms require constant readjustment of methods and activities since every teaching episode is a new and valuable experience.

### **English Teaching**

There may have been some changes in the aims and objectives of teaching English in India, consistent with its position in the country and the increasing regionalization of the media of instruction. There have not been many changes either in the approaches or in the syllabuses. Even these have been criticized by teachers as being unimaginative or uninteresting. It may be that teachers handling these materials require to do some hard work before they go to the class room to teach. Also, the apathy towards English teaching may be due to the fact that teachers have not acquired the skill of reading both at the physical and mental level. If the teacher does not possess this important skill of reading, it is not really possible to transfer it to the learners. Hence the teachers just stick to the course, and often are forced to complete it as usual, much to the satisfaction of the students and their parents.

For some of these reasons, English has been taught as a content rather than a skill subject. Difficult words are explained, grammar rules taught and memorized. It is more important, it is felt, for the student to have understood the text than to have acquired fluency in English.

### **The Three-Language Formula**

Further, the Government policy stresses the use of English as a 'library' language. The three-language formula requires all

languages to be treated equally so that the students become fluent in Hindi, the regional language, and English (Singha). This rarely happens but that is a part of the linguistic reality in India and students have learnt to live with it. The absence of effective demarcation in the roles of Hindi, English and the regional language, has led to the development of an ambiguous attitude towards English. There is the general feeling that it is hardly worthwhile teaching and learning English, and yet the demand for the study of English has been steadily increasing.

### **Suggested Approach**

Perhaps a more meaningful, a more focussed approach can urge the English teachers towards their work. Few teachers are motivated towards English. They may have some instrumental motivation but rarely any integrative motivation. They feel a lack of involvement because they are not given full opportunities to participate and contribute to the courses or to discuss their approaches. They may not have been able to find answers to questions they have been asking themselves. A reflective approach to the teaching of English may motivate and encourage them to find answers for themselves. This may also help in changing their negative attitude to English teaching by encouraging their active participation in different classroom activities.



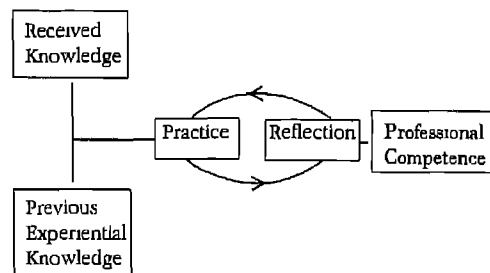
### Reflection and Reflective Teaching

Reflection, according to Calderhead, is the critical evaluation of one's own teaching in the light of alternative models and the nature, purpose and context of teaching. It facilitates the links between both theory and practice in education and promotes self-directed growth of teachers by making them play a more active role in their own professional accountability. Professional understandings, says Donald Schon, are essentially based on action after they have been subjected to deep thinking.

Cruikshank talks of reflective teaching as the teacher's thinking about what happens in classroom lessons and considers alternative means of achieving these goals; he thinks of it as a means to provide the student with an opportunity to consider the teaching event thoughtfully, analytically and objectively. To Zeichner, a reflective teacher is one who assesses the origins, purposes and consequences of his/her work at all levels. Reflective teaching can help the teacher to take an active and negotiated role in shaping his/her work. Teaching requires a level of interpretation and analysis, practice rather than theory. The reflective teacher makes use of whatever sources of knowledge and understanding are available and appropriate. Hence teachers have to be given sufficient opportunities to develop such an understanding and the temperament of reflection. Increasing practitioner research in recent years as-

serts the necessity for teachers to examine and analyse their own activities. Their valid need for external support in their learning is related to their own condition and has to be taken as the starting point. What they are looking for is a change in awareness, which can come if this awareness is grounded in practice, a kind of reflection. Having understood and analyzed his/her own real life problem the teacher can apply this theory which accounted for the problem, in solving a new problem. Teachers can reflect on the nature of their own classroom problems and experiences, this self-evaluation can be a very helpful and rewarding experience.

M. Wallace suggests a reflective model of teaching, given below



As can be seen from the diagram, this model is applicable to teachers of English also. While facts, data and theories go into the formulation of research, inner personal reflection is of the utmost importance as it enables the teachers to better themselves in their profession. The habit of reflection does demand personal skills and has to be acquired as a 'people skill'.

for a teacher comes in contact with various kinds of people in the normal course of a day. Doubtless, the position of a teacher in India is one of authority and respect. The profession does qualify him/her for this. In addition, the teacher's personal knowledge is equally important, because all social respect comes from this knowledge. Yet, many of us do not share this personal experiential knowledge. If we do so we will go a long way towards making teaching a profession and teachers professionals which is the need of the hour. As professionals, we may command respect for we have to take informed and insightful decisions both inside the class and outside.

In the changing Indian scenario the teacher has become a facilitator of learning. The facilitator is concerned not only with individual interpersonal skills, but also with group dynamics. Students and teachers become equal partners in an activity in a learner-centred classroom where the teacher is an instrument of change. The teacher may not be able to do well with a particular group of students but by reflection on the event, he/she should be engaged in facilitating improvement in the students' learning which will also result in his/her own improvement.

### **Applications in the English Classroom**

In the present changing times we have to start preparing reflective teachers (Pultorak), so that they will be well prepared to teach in the future as well.

Moreover, the teachers have to create the path for others.

### *Activity 1*

We can ask the teachers to form small groups of three or four or in pairs, and discuss the following questions.

1. What activities work best with your students ?
2. What are the difficulties you face with your students ?
3. What difficulties do the students create for you ?

The discussion may lead to their realization of a number of things. The aims of the activity are.

1. The talk itself lowers the emotional pressure.
2. They realize that they are not the only ones who were having the particular difficulty.
3. That saying something to someone else can make clear to oneself a puzzling matter.

(Levine)

From this understanding of their own difficulties they may be able to understand their students' approach to learning and language development. This 'caring and sharing' may create an environment supporting of language learning and teaching. Reflection may help since learning takes place according to our needs, interests and the external demands of the situation.

*Activity 2*

Having got accustomed to discussing their academic matters and interests on a common forum or with each other, the teachers can now be asked to discuss the following questions

- 1 Does teaching and learning English mean teaching the prescribed textbooks only ?
- 2 What procedures do you adopt for teaching English structures ?
3. How do you improve the student's vocabulary ?
- 4 Are language skills developed if you use the lecture method ?  
if you explain rules of grammar ?  
if you translate the text from English into the mother tongue ?

(NCERT)

The value of such an activity is that teachers think about their beliefs and experiences, about language learning and teaching which can lead to possible change and modification in them.

*Activity 3*

Experienced teachers can also observe a model lesson by one of their colleagues and then discuss the following questions

- 1 How did the lesson go ?
2. What did the students do ?
- 3 What was the outcome ?
- 4 What was your reaction to it ?
5. What would you have done had you been the teacher ?

(Wragg)

As Ramani says, teachers enjoy looking at actual lessons so this could be the starting point for several activities, all of which could enhance their theoretical understanding

*Activity 4*

Teachers may also be asked to observe actual lessons of other teachers in other schools in their normal course of duties, teaching in their normal styles. They will observe the lesson with the following questions in mind.

- 1 What would you like to know about the teacher in advance ? Why ?
2. What would you like to know about the class in advance ? Why ?
- 3 How motivated are the students ?
- 4 Do they contribute to the development of the lesson ?
- 5 What are the external factors that place limitations on learner direction?

(Wragg, Tudor)

After the lesson, the teachers can discuss the following questions

1. What were the good points of the lesson ?
- 2 Point out some of the things which did not go too well ? Why ?
3. Were there silences in the class ? Why?
4. Do teachers really require these silence ? Why ?
5. Was there evidence that the students were interested ?
- 6 Did the students give their own ideas?

(Williams)

The teachers may be keen and responsive on seeing one of their own peers in the class and talking to them about his/her own experiences. Those who are close to the job of teaching, who actually work in schools, have a particularly valuable part to play (Roberts). The personal involvement of such people in practice gives them a special credibility in talking to other practitioners.

Such activities and demonstrations make teaching a professional activity rather than an esoteric activity every teacher does behind closed doors. The discussions may help the teachers in realizing that teaching involves applying the knowledge gained from educational theory and research to the classroom and effective methods can be evolved by every teacher for achieving these goals

(Penington)

Through this reflective approach teachers will be actively involved in teaching through interaction as 'discussion leaders', reflection and group work. They will become 'doers'. To me this approach seems suitable for teaching English in difficult circumstances (Tickoo) where there are few teaching aids, poor physical facilities and 'seemingly' disinterested

teachers. Knowing the situation in India it may not be fair to unnecessarily criticize older methods of and approaches to teaching English. We have to reassure our teachers that the approach they follow is acceptable; a little bit of reflection will give it the necessary fine tuning it needs.

English teaching is a great show in India. It is a 'teaching spectacle'. If the teachers are encouraged to adopt this reflective approach, it is hoped, we can change English teaching from being a 'teaching spectacle' to a 'learning festival' (Coleman)

Knowledge, as has been said, is the creation of man's own routes for learning, a constant process of interpretation of new information (Dodman) and making sense of data. The part played by the teacher has best been described in Khalil Gibran's *The Prophet*.

Then said a teacher : speak to us of teaching  
And he said No man can reveal to you aught  
But that which already lies half asleep in  
the dawning of your knowledge. The teacher  
who walks in the shadow of the temple,  
among  
his followers gives not of his wisdom but  
rather of his faith and his lovingness. If he  
is indeed wise, he does not bid you enter  
the house of his wisdom but rather leads you  
to the threshold of your own mind.

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# Are Teachers Teaching EVS-II at the Primary Level Competent Enough?

## *An Indepth Study*

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*The introduction of competency-based textbooks in Environmental Studies (EVS) II as well as the avowed objective of achievement of MLL by all the pupils puts a heavy demand on the awareness, knowledge and skill levels of the teachers. Are our teachers competent enough to handle this functionally? This study brings to the fore the ground realities. Implications of the findings as well as realistic operational strategies have been outlined.*

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ALTHOUGH approaches to teaching - learning have gone through a sea change i.e. from the behaviouristic to the cognitive and then to the constructivistic approach, so that pupils' learning attains an optimality, the conviction that the teacher is the most important human input for deterministic functional implementation of any approach has rarely gone through much of a change. The importance of teaching inside the classroom and consequent learning are evident in the reviews of Scheerens (1992), Mortimore (1993) and Creemers (1994). In the same spirit, McGilchrist (1996) has also discussed with supportive evidence the importance of faculty development for children's learning. Commenting on parameters affecting pupils' achievement,

Darling Hammond (1995) states that knowledgeable teachers and their students in a supportive, caring environment are hallmarks of improving achievement. In this framework Rothman (1996) has proposed his model, acronymed HELPS (High Expectation Learning Process for Standards), which is expected to enable the teacher to functionally connect what they do everyday in the classroom to standards and assessment. However, efforts to improve teaching should be (Viadero, 1986) continuous, collaborative and tailored to the individual needs of the schools and the teachers. Sutton (1996) advocates that any effort to improve teaching should contain a liberal dose of advancing the knowledge competency of the teacher.

While the above studies indicate the importance of improving the knowledge-base, transactional abilities and operational skills of the teacher so as to bring about a positive change in the achievement of the pupils, the ground realities are not very encouraging. On the basis of a broad-based study Evans (1996) has concluded that teachers are untrained and ill prepared to meet their responsibilities. On this issue Schwartz (1996) tries to identify some causes of this state of unpreparedness, whereas Guskey (1996) reemphasizes that educators have a professional obligation to keep abreast of the knowledge base in order to be optimally effective.

In the Indian context, the crucial role of the teacher, particularly at the primary level, has been brought into focus by three policy inputs.

### **Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE)**

This is viewed (EFA, 1993) as a composite programme of (a) Access, (b) Retention, and (c) Universal Achievement. It is the last component where the teacher occupies the centre stage in so far as comprehending, transacting and assessing the achievement of MLL are concerned.

### **District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)**

Within its holistic framework, DPEP envisages 'Quality with Equity' so as to nullify

the differential attainments (Sammons *et al*, 1993; Creemers, 1994) of the pupils. The basic need for this is to improve the quality of teaching - learning.

### **Contextuality of Primary Education**

Research based perception on primary education shows that it is contextual. However, in a different framework we argue that in the context of

- educational planning
- curriculum design
- textbook preparation
- language structures (Sapir, 1956, Vygotsky, 1962)
- Classroom transactional strategies
- learning structures
- specific vocabulary
- assessment tools
- participatory approach

each discipline, like EVS-II, has a discipline-specific contextuality in classroom transaction.

The referred research findings along with the above policy inputs emphasizing the optimization (*a la* MLL) of the learning outcomes through the use of competency based textbooks put a heavy premium on the teacher in the framework of his/her **Knowledge Competencies, Performance Competencies, and Consequence Competencies**. This study tries to assess the readiness of the teacher to accept this challenge in the context of EVS-II.

The rationale for this study is shown diagrammatically in Figure 1.

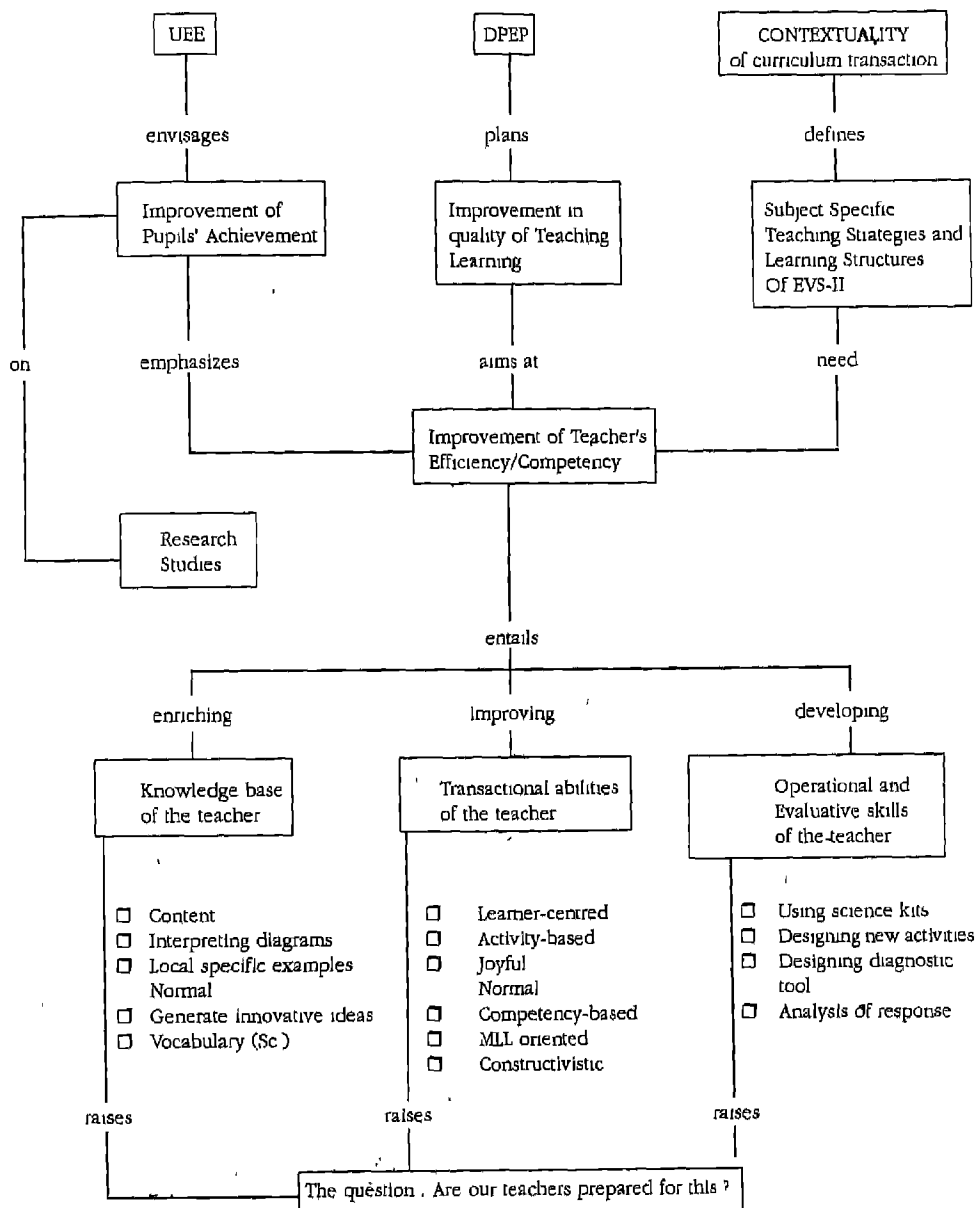


Figure 1 : Conceptual model of the study



### Delimitations

The study is delimited on the following points,

- (a) Since EVS-II textbooks are operative in Classes III, IV and V, our study will converge on those teachers who are teaching EVS-II in these classes.
- (b) Schools in Orissa (Oriya medium) will be taken into consideration

### Methodology

#### *Objectives*

The objectives of the investigation are

- (a) To design a diagnostic tool for identifying the deficiencies of the teachers teaching EVS-II, using the competency-based textbooks.
- (b) To ensure that the tool be in such a format that the DIET Faculty can administer it and draw conclusions after suitably translating it into appropriate regional languages.
- (c) To administer the tool on Primary Teachers and specify their deficiencies in a focussed format.

### Research Questions

The specific questions to which answers were sought fall under three broad categories.

#### *Awareness*

- (a) Are the teachers aware of the philosophy and objectives of MLL?
- (b) Do they comprehend the operational meanings of the competencies identified?

- (c) Have the teachers gone through SOPT training so as to have acquired some amount of awareness about Child-centred, Activity-based, Joyful-learning strategies?

#### *Knowledge*

- (a) Do the teachers have enough content knowledge to transact EVS - II effectively so that the attainment of MLL is achieved by all the pupils?
- (b) Are there any hard spots in the content areas which the teacher feels diffident about transacting?

#### *Skill*

- (a) Do the teachers possess the skill to use the integrated science kit?
- (b) Do the teachers possess the skill to design new activities using local resources?
- (c) Do the teachers possess the skill to design achievement tests to assess whether the pupils have attained the competencies delineated under MLL?

#### *Sample*

The sample consisted of 131 teachers drawn from 51 schools located in urban, rural and the under-privileged sectors of the society

#### *Tool*

The development of the tool consisted of the following discernible steps.

A detailed analysis of the EVS-II textbooks of Classes III, IV, V to get acquainted with the reference frame and

locate domains of possible hard spots. The detailed design is given in Figure 2.

The tool was refined by field trials as

well as reviewed by experts.

The tool has six sections covering specific dimensions of diagnosis.

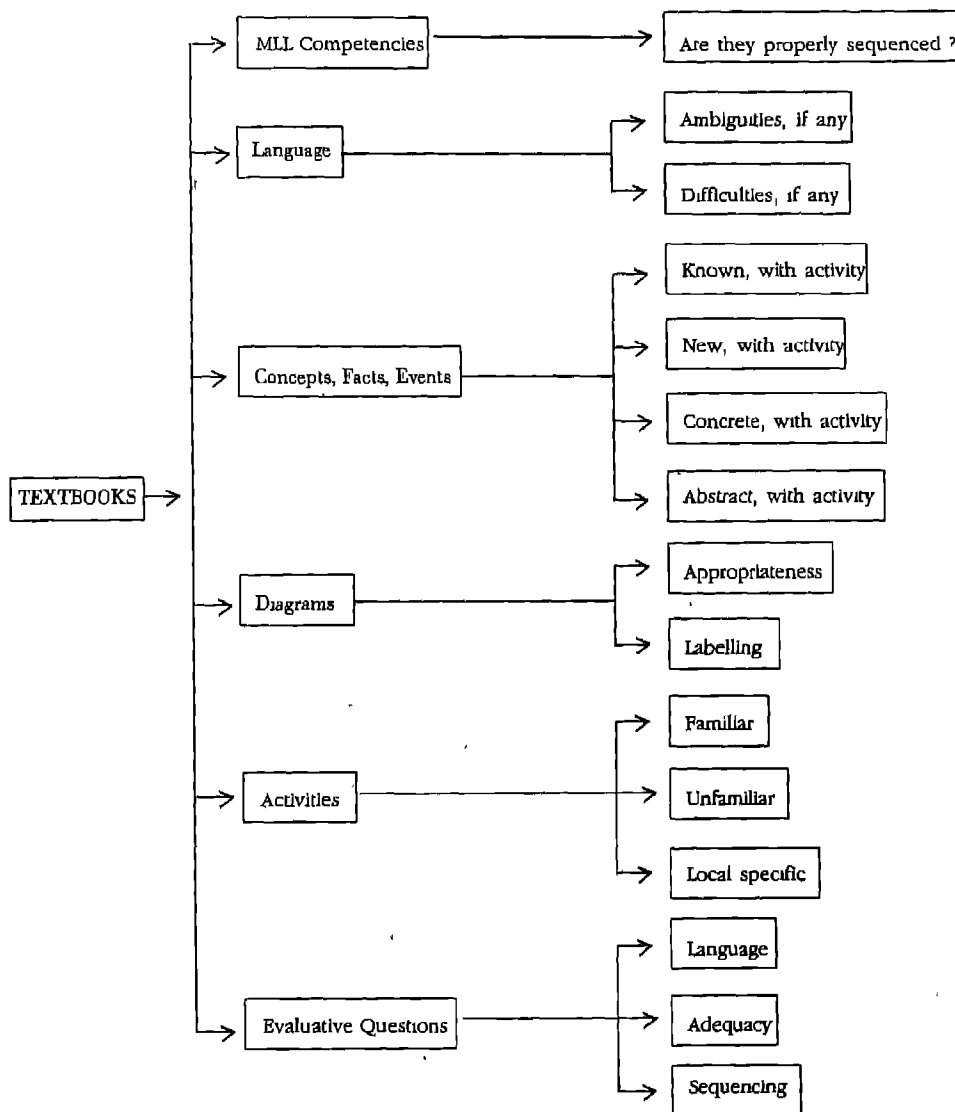


Figure 2 . Conceptual design for analysis of the textbooks.

Section	Dimension	No of items
I	Personal profile	14
II	Exposure to training	24
III	EVS-II contents of Class III	15
IV	EVS-II contents of Class IV	11
V	EVS-II contents of Class V	35
VI	Ability to set diagnostic questions	4

The tool has a total of 103 items

By using the split-half technique to analyze the responses of the teachers in the trial administration, the reliability coefficient obtained was 0.93

## Results and Discussion

The discussion is presented domain-wise to facilitate interpretation and diagnosis of intervention areas.

### Area of Personal Profile

There are 14 items on which responses were sought under this category. However, data in respect of only those items which have a direct relevance to this project are presented in Table 1.

Perks (1975) and Symington (1982) have indicated that lack of background in science spells doom for teaching of science at the primary level

TABLE 1

Sl No	Description	Schools in DPEP District	Schools in non-DPEP Districts	Total Sample
1.	Percentage of teachers who are trained (either C.T. or B Ed)	100.0	88.8	93.1
2.	Percentage of teachers who are non-Matriculates	12.0	3.7	6.8
3.	Percentage of teachers having science background i.e. +2 (Sc.) pass	0.0	3.7	6.8
4.	Percentage of teachers who have not attended any training programme within the last five years	24.0	88.9	64.1

### Area of Awareness

The degree of success of the implementation of DPEP in the context of improvement of the achievement of the pupils, depends to a large extent on teachers level of preparedness in MLL, Child-centred, Activity-based teaching leading to joyful learning.

The data obtained about the awareness of the teacher on the above issues is presented in Table 2

The above data clearly shows that a high percentage of teachers in the total sample have no functional knowledge of MLL and Child-Centred Activity-Based Joyful learning structures

TABLE 2

Sl No	Description	Schools in DPEP District	Schools in non-DPEP Districts	Total Sample
1	Percentage of teachers who do not know anything about MLL	0.0	96.3	59.4
2	Percentage of teachers who have not undergone any training about the philosophy and operationalization of MLL	28.0	96.3	70.2
3	Percentage of teachers who have not attended any SOPT training camps with special reference to child-centred, activity based teaching leading to joyful learning	24.0	67.9	51.1

### Area of Knowledge

Here we confine ourselves strictly to the contents and competencies as contained in the EVS-II textbooks for Classes-III, IV and V.

### Rules to Diagnose Deficiencies (Hard Spots)

If it is observed that 50 per cent or more than 50 per cent of the teachers have failed to give correct response to any particular question then the concept/s included in that question was/were considered to be a hard spot for the teachers

### Hard Spots

#### Class III

- Health and Hygiene
- Characteristics of living beings in the context of animals and plants

- Difference between man-made and natural objects
- Differentiation between root and stem.

#### Class IV

- Functions of root, stem and leaf
- Rotations of the moon
- Functions of heart, lungs and brain
- Season and weather

#### Class V

- Occurrence of day and night in relation to rotation of celestial bodies
- Light propagation
- Uses of water
- Cloud formation
- Pollution of water
- Producers of food
- Machine and its uses
- Work
- Specific gravity and its calculation in simple cases
- Maintenance of balance between the percentage of Oxygen and Carbon Dioxide in the atmosphere

### Age Group of Teachers Giving Wrong Responses

An individualized analysis of the responses showed that the teachers who had teaching experience of more than 15 years and were more than 35 years of age mostly gave wrong responses to the test items on content areas

### Area of Skill

Under the area of skill, attention was focussed on two specific issues, namely,

(a) skill to use the science kit-box and to design new activities, and (b) skill to frame suitable test items to assess the achievement of the pupils in the framework of MLL. The data are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

TABLE 3

Sl No	Description	Schools in DPEP District	Schools in non-DPEP Districts	Total Sample
1.	Percentage of teachers who have seen a Science Kit Box	100	50.6	69.4
2.	Percentage of teachers who have used or can use a Science Kit Box	94.0	35.8	58.0
3.	Percentage of teachers who could suggest/design some new activity in the concept chosen by them	28.0	3.7	23.6

TABLE 4

Sl No	Description	Schools in DPEP District	Schools in non-DPEP Districts	Total Sample
1.	Percentage of teachers who could frame traditional questions in the concept areas given	100.0	100.00	100.0
2.	Percentage of teachers who could frame questions to assess the achievement of the defined competencies by the pupils	46.0	19.7	32.0

### Implications for Improving Teacher Competency

In the framework of the identified deficiencies the following intervention strategies

are suggested to improve the preparedness of the teachers.

### Global Format

Massive training programme, to be taken up in a time-targeted mode which should be

- participatory (to remove alienated isolation)
- activity based (to infuse academic motivation)
- need-specific (to remove diffident ignorance)
- anchored on cognitive conflict (to eradicate illusion of non-ignorance)
- interactive (to remove conceptual smug)
- teacher friendly (to erase crisis of confidence)

### Contextual Format

Since quite a high percentage of teachers do not have a science background, special extension programmes of a general nature should be undertaken in the areas of

- general awareness about EVS-II
- elucidation of the hard spots in EVS-II
- structure of competencies in EVS-II
- linguistic framework of EVS-II
- joyful activities in EVS-II
- diagrammatic approach to EVS-II
- process-based competencies in EVS-II
- evaluative questions in EVS-II

Although the implications suggested above contain many shoulds, it is worth-

while to state in brief the realistic methods for achieving the same by improving the teaching efficiency of EVS-II.

### **From Here to Where**

Three possible channels are open for operationalization of the implications listed above.

#### **A Traditional Method (Training of Teachers)**

##### *Problems*

- Very large population
- Mostly multigrade set up
- Training loss in cascade system
- Cascade system also fails due to absence of definite action plan with implementing agency at various stages
- Contextuality demands contextual master trainers
- Sustainability at regular intervals

##### *Result*

- Almost no training of teachers

#### **B. Innovative Method (Teleconferencing)**

##### *Problems*

- Teachers have to be grouped at a place where there is two-way audio and one-way video facility
- Booking of satellite time

- Mostly multigrade set up
- Mostly one-shot affair
- Difficult to reach very remote areas

##### *Advantages*

- Teachers directly interact with experts
- A great motivating factor
- Almost no transmission loss of training

#### **C Alternative Method (Interactive Modules)**

##### *Problems*

- Suitable authors to write modules in an interactive format;
- Mass publication and making them available to teachers,
- A vibrant and active DIET, BRC and CRT.

##### *Advantages*

- Teacher has something to fall back upon
- Teacher can refer at his convenience
- Uniformity of broad pattern of enrichment
- Can be made contextual in Language, Examples, Activities, Diagrams, etc.
- Teachers can regularly meet at CRC at a mutually convenient time

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# Parents' Participation in Children's Academic Activities in Relation to Their Academic Achievement at the Primary Level

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*Following a systematic approach, this study has worked around five objectives, aiming to see the influence of the five best predictors of Parents' Participation in Children's Academic Activities on Primary School Students' Academic Achievement. The data for the study have been gathered on 42 parents of primary school students and their wards. The tools of the study have been (i) Mangalam Self Report of Parents' Participation in Children's Academic Activities, and (ii) Primary School Students' Annual Examination Marks*

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THE PERPLEXING phenomena of academic underachievement and failure among students of various stages of education have been and continue to be a cause of great concern to educationists, teachers, guidance-counsellors and educational planners, the world over.

In spite of all the best efforts made in schools to raise the abilities, capabilities and other personality characteristics of children, it is not possible to obtain the optimum level of educational goal, i.e. all round development of one's personality in a social context. One of the major

factors influencing educational product is parental behaviour. In fact, parental influence on the child's personality remains throughout life, the most pervasive of all influences. A teacher can influence a child roughly a year, whereas, a parent has considerable influence on a child for nearly twenty years.

Commonly, parents do not realize the significance of their participation in children's academic activities. A comprehensive amount of research work done in the field of parental behaviour clearly indicates its significant influence on the child's



various characteristics. Academic achievement has been evidenced by Wilson (1976), Edwards (1976), Koudelkova and Kuceirova (1977) and many others, to be influenced by parental behaviour. Better academic achievement and favourable attitude towards reading have been found to be associated with parental interest in academic affairs in the study made by Fields (1975), with parental involvement in child's education by Wilson (1976) and O'Neil (1978) in their studies. Parent-child relationship has also been found as a significant predictor of grade level by Edwards (1976), in his research showing that high relationship between father and child commonly leads to high academic achievement. In studies made by Su (1976) and Tiwari (1974), the parents of high achievers have been found to be higher on giving love, affection and respect to their children as compared to the parents of low achievers.

In other studies conducted by Su (1976) and Tiwari (1974), punishment, rejection, restrictive behaviour and severe attitude of parents have been explored as determinants of low achievement. On the other hand, Juneja (1974) has demonstrated in his study that negative reinforcement of misbehaviour, more immediate punishment, consistency in fulfilling threats, relatively higher maternal control, rationally oriented authority, certainty in managing and influencing child behaviour and warmth always lead to high academic achievement. Difference in parental aspirations and expectations has

been found related to low and high achievement in the studies made by Boerger (1971), Fine (1982). In these studies aspirations and high expectations as a part of parental behaviour have been established as a strong measure of high academic achievement but with the condition of indirect parental involvement in children's academic activities, personal autonomy, independence and encouragement to the children. Children with parents having high aspirations and direct involvement in children's academic activities have been found to be low achievers. In some other studies, different parental factors have also been reported linked with academic grade levels of children.

Specifying the parental behaviour in terms of their children's academic activities, Agarwal (1990), has established an equation for predicting students' academic achievement. She, in this study, investigated the five best predictors of scholastic performance in terms of specific dimensions (Extreme Autonomy, Intrusiveness, Parental Direction, Neglect, Ignoring) of parents' participation in their children's academic activities. This study was confined only to the secondary school students. As elementary schooling is the most important phase of every child's education, a need was felt by the researcher to investigate whether the academic achievement of elementary school students may also be influenced by the same pattern of parents' participation in children's academic activities.

The major objective of this investigation was to study the effect of the different ways of Parents' Participation in their children's academic activities and its impact on children's academic achievement

The subsidiary objectives were

1. To find out the effect of Parents' Extreme Autonomous Participation in Children's Academic Activities on children's academic success.
2. To ascertain the outcome of Parents' Intrusive Participation in Children's Academic Activities on children's academic accomplishments.
3. To reveal the impact of Parental Direction in Parents' Participation in Children's Academic activities on children's academic success
4. To discover the effect of Parents' Neglecting Participation in Children's Academic Activities on children's academic achievement.
5. To determine the outcome of Parents' Ignoring Participation in Children's academic activities on children's academic accomplishments.

The terms used in the study are

1. *Extreme Autonomy in Parents' Participation in Children's Academic Activities*. Parents giving full liberty to their wards while participating in their

educational activities, viz. completion of their home assignments, etc.

2. *Intrusiveness in Parents' Participation in Children's Academic Activities*. Interference of parents in their children's academic activities
3. *Parental Direction in Parents' Participation in Children's Academic Activities*. Parents providing guidance, whenever their children require it in their educational activities.
4. *Neglect in Parents' Participation in Children's Academic Activities*. Negligence by the parents in their children's academic activities, viz. failing to provide educational material in time.
5. *Ignorance in Parents' Participation in Children's Academic Activities*. Overlooking their children's academic requirements

### Population

The population of this study has been confined only to the parents of all the students of Grades II, III, IV and V of one primary school of Ghaziabad city

### Sample

In order to achieve the objectives of this project, as mentioned earlier, the parents of 42 students have been taken at random i.e. 11 each from Grades II and III, 10 each from Grades IV and V to comprise the sample for the study

## Tools

The measuring instruments to collect data are as follows.

1. *Mangalam Self Report of Parents' Participation in Children's Academic Activities.*

To measure the independent variable of the study, an inventory constructed and standardized by Agrawal (1990) i.e. the parental form of 'Children's Report of Parents' Participation in Children's Academic Activities' has been used. This inventory is comprised of 26 dimensions defined by Schaefer (1958). Each dimension is measured by using a sub-test. Every sub-test has four items. Therefore the total test has 104 items, each item has been framed as a five point rating scale.

The split half reliability of each dimension individually has been found not less than .62. The validity of the inventory has been established in the form of construct validity as internal consistency for each sub-scale. The t-values for each sub-scale have been found varying from 2.04 to 7.15. A sharp factor analysis of the above mentioned 26 dimensions into three major factors, i.e. Favourable, Unfavourable and Disciplinary, has established its construct validity in another way. Norms of the inventory have been established in the form of aver-

ages for each dimension as well as for each factor. The inventory includes positive as well as negative test items.

2. *Annual Examination Scores in the Form of Percentage*

The annual examination scores of the last examination of the children whose parents were scored on MSRPPCAA, have been taken as the measure of academic achievement. These scores have been used in the form of percentages.

The reliability and validity of these results have been established by Agrawal (1990). The average of each grade's total scores has been taken as cut off score to categorize all the students into high and low groups on this variable.

## Data Collection

For the purpose of the present study, data have been collected on the above mentioned MSRPPCAA by giving it to 42 parents and by taking the school examination results of their wards. Obtained data have been scored, organized and tabulated on the basis of the directions given in the Test Manual.

## Statistical Techniques

In order to test the null hypotheses mentioned earlier,  $2 \times 2$  fold Chi Square test has been applied.

## Results, Analysis and Discussions

After analyzing the data the main findings (in the form Chi-Square values) of the present investigation are presented below

**Chi-Square Values for the Difference between High Achievers and Low Achievers in Relation to Various Specific and Factorial Dimensions of Parents' Participation in their Children's Academic Activities**

S No	Name of the Variable	Obtained Value of Chi-Square	Level of Significance
1	Extreme Autonomy	5.689	02
2.	Intrusiveness	.465	NS
3.	Parental Direction	9.303	01
4.	Neglect	9.467	01
5.	Ignoring	7.638	01

1. The  $2 \times 2$  Chi-Square value for Extreme Autonomy in Parents' Participation in Children's Academic Activities and Children's Academic Achievement has been found to be 5.689 (see table)

This value is more than the table value (5.412) of Chi-Square for df1 at 02 level of significance. This indicates that the Extreme Autonomy in Parents' Participation in their children's academic activities significantly influences children's academic achievement.

This clarifies that the children receiving Extreme Autonomy in their aca-

demc activities by their parents are not high academic achievers. On the other hand, children not receiving Extreme Autonomy by their parents in their academic activities score better in their academics.

Obviously, it seems extreme autonomy is an undesirable aspect of parental involvement to reach the optimum level of their children's academics. This conception receives strength from the findings obtained by Agrawal (1990), in which she has expressed that more permissive behaviour of parents leads to underachievement. It may be summed up here that extreme autonomy should be avoided in children's academic activities.

2. The Chi-Square value (see table) obtained on Intrusiveness in PFCAA, i.e. .465 has been found very low to be significant at any level of significance. Therefore it may be stated that Intrusiveness in Parents' Participation in their Children's Academic Activities does not significantly influence children's academic achievement.

Results indicate that the high and low achievers equally encounter Intrusiveness of their parents while performing their academic activities.

This indicates that the interference of parents in their wards' educational activities does not have any influence

on their academic achievement. Contrary to this, Agrawal (1990), in her study, has established intrusive participation of parents as a significant but negative predictor of academic achievement. The difference in results may be justified on the ground that the elementary school students are too small to perform their academic activities independently.

- 3 The calculated value of Chi-Square (see table) for Parental Direction, 9.303, has been found very high to be significant at all the levels of significance. Hence it may be concluded here that Parental Direction in their Children's Academic Activities significantly influences children's academic achievement.

This shows that the children receiving Parental Direction in their Academic Activities are high achievers academically. On the other hand, children not receiving Parental Direction in their Academic Activities score low in their academics.

It may be inferred here that the more the parents' direction in their children's academic sphere, the more the children will achieve. Similar results have been produced by Agrawal (1990).

4. Parents' Neglect in their children's academic activities has been reported as significantly influencing children's academic achievement as the com-

puted Chi-Square value on this variable has been 9.467 (see table 4) which is very high in comparison to the table value of the same for df1 at all the levels of significance.

This shows that the children receiving Neglect in their academic activities by their parents are not high achievers academically. On the other hand, children not receiving 'Neglect' in their academic activities by their parents perform better in their academics.

It may be concluded here that the parents' 'Neglect' in their children's academic activities may lower the performance of their children. Agrawal and many others have also reported this particular behaviour in the same manner.

5. Results of Parents' 'Ignoring' in Children's Academic Activities show the significant influence of the same on academic achievement as the Chi-Square for this has been found to be 7.638 (see table), which is higher than the value of Chi-Square (df1) at .02 level of confidence. Thus, it may be concluded that the Parents' 'Ignoring' in their children's academic activities significantly influences children's academic achievement.

This shows that the children receiving ignorance in their academic activities by their parents are not high achievers academically. On the other hand, children not receiving ignorance in

their academic activities by their parents perform better in their academics. It is also evident from the study made by Agrawal (1990), which provides a ground to conclude that the students of elementary school may also perform poorly in their academics if they are receiving their parents' ignorance.

### Conclusion

1. Parents' participation in children's academic activities also plays an important role in enhancing the level of the child's academic achievement at elementary school level
2. Academic achievement of elementary school students can be improved by reducing the magnitude of extreme autonomy, neglect and ignoring, and by enhancing the potency of parental direction by their parents while partici-

pating in their academic activities. Intrusiveness in the case of elementary school students does not have any value in influencing their academic achievement.

The results of the study can be used by parents, teachers, guidance-councillors and educational planners. Knowing the proper and appropriate ways of parents' participation in children's academic activities would help parents to shape their own behaviour accordingly. For teachers, this knowledge may be used to guide them in solving day-to-day problems of children's academic activities. Similarly, guidance-workers and school psychologists may try to analyze the educational problems of school children from the point of view of their parents' academic involvement. This study may also provide a guideline to the educational policy makers to make arrangements for parental guidance.

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**JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S MESSAGE**  
on the  
**First Day**  
of  
**Independence**

We have hard work ahead. There is no resting for any one of us till we redeem our pledge in full, till we make all the people of India what destiny intended them to be. We are citizens of a great country, on the verge of bold advance, and we have to live up to that high standard.

All of us, to whatever religion we may belong, are equally the children of India with equal rights, privileges and obligations. We cannot encourage communalism or narrow-mindedness, for no nation can be great whose people are narrow in thought or in action.





## GANDHIJI'S TALISMAN

“I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test :

Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it ? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny ? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions ?

Then you will find your doubts and your self melting away.”

*M.K. Gandhi*

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